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*ALCIPHRON:*  
OR, THE  
MINUTE PHILOSOPHER.  
IN  
SEVEN DIALOGUES.

*Containing an APOLOGY for the Christian Religion,  
against those who are called Free-thinkers.*

VOLUME the FIRST.



*They have forsaken me the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them  
out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. Jerem. ii. 13.*

*Sin mortuus, ut quidam minuti Philosophi censent, nihil sentiam,  
non vereor ne hunc errorem meum mortui Philosophi irrideant.*

*Cicero*

*G. Berkeley*


L O N D O N:  
Printed for J. TONSON in the Strand, 1732.

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**MVSEVM  
BRITANNICVM**



## ADVERTISEMENT.



THE Author's Design being to consider the Free-thinker in the various Lights of Atheist, Libertine, Enthusiast, Scornor, Critic, Metaphysician, Fatalist, and Sceptic, it must not therefore be imagined, that every one of these Characters agrees with every individual Free-thinker, no more being implied, than that each Part agrees with some or other of the Sect. There may possibly be a Reader who shall think the Character of Atheist agrees with none: But though it hath been often said, there is no such thing as a Speculative Atheist; yet we must allow, there are several Atheists who pretend to Speculation. This the Author knows to be true; and is well assured, that one of the most noted Writers against Christianity in  
our

## ADVERTISEMENT.

our Times, declared, he had found out a Demonstration against the Being of a God. And he doubts not, whoever will be at the pains to inform himself, by a general Conversation, as well as Books, of the Principles and Tenets of our modern Free-thinkers, will see too much Cause to be persuaded that nothing in the ensuing Characters is beyond the Life. As for the Treatise concerning VISION, why the Author annexed it to the MINUTE PHILOSOPHER, will appear upon Perusal of the Fourth Dialogue.

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### E R R A T A.

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THE  
MINUTE PHILOSOPHER.

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THE FIRST DIALOGUE.

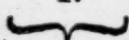
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DIAL.

I.

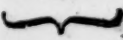


tions to be esteemed natural. XV. Truth the same, notwithstanding Diversity of Opinions. XVI. Rule and Measure of moral Truths.

I.



Flattered my self, *Theages*, that before this time I might have been able to have sent you an agreeable Account of the Success of the Affair, which brought me into this remote corner of the Country. But instead of this, I shou'd now give you the Detail of its Miscarriage, if I did not rather choose to entertain you with some amusing Incidents, which have helped to make me easy under a Circumstance I cou'd neither obviate nor foresee. Events are not in our power; but it always is, to make a good use even of the very worst. And I must needs own, the Course and Event of this Affair gave opportunity for Reflections, that make me some amends for a great loss of Time, Pains, and Expence. A Life of Action, which takes its Issue from the Counsels, Passions, and Views of other Men, if it doth not draw a Man to imitate, will at least teach him to observe. And a Mind at liberty to reflect on its own Observations, if it produce nothing useful to the World, seldom fails of Entertainment

tertainment to it self. For several Months D I A L.  
past I have enjoy'd such Liberty and Lei- I.  
sure in this distant Retreat, far beyond the   
Verge of that great Whirlpool of Business,  
Faction, and Pleasure, which is called  
*the World*. And a Retreat in it self agreeable,  
after a long Scene of Trouble and Disquiet,  
was made much more so by the Conversation  
and good Qualities of my Host *Euphranor*,  
who unites in his own Person the Philosopher  
and the Farmer, two Characters not so inconsistent  
in Nature as by Custom they seem to be.  
*Euphranor*, from the time he left the University,  
hath lived in this small Town, where he is  
possessed of a convenient House with a hundred  
Acres of Land adjoining to it; which being  
improved by his own Labour, yieldt him a  
plentiful Subsistence. He hath a good Collection,  
chiefly of old Books, left him by a Clergyman  
his Uncle, under whose Care he was brought up.  
And the Business of his Farm doth not hinder  
him from making good use of it. He hath read  
much, and thought more; his Health and  
Strength of Body enabling him the better to  
bear Fatigue of Mind. He is of opinion that  
he cou'd not carry on his Studies with more  
Advantage in the Closet than the Field,  
where his Mind is seldom idle while he

DIAL. prunes the Trees, follows the Plough, or  
 I. looks after his Flocks. In the House of  
 this honest Friend I became acquainted  
 with *Crito*, a neighbouring Gentleman of  
 distinguished Merit and Estate, who lives  
 in great Friendship with *Euphranor*. Last  
 Summer, *Crito*, whose Parish-Church is  
 in our Town, dining on a Sunday at *Euphranor*'s, I happened to inquire after his  
 Guests, whom we had seen at Church with  
 him the Sunday before. They are both  
 well, said *Crito*, but, having once occa-  
 sionally conformed, to see what sort of  
 Assembly our Parish cou'd afford, they had  
 no farther Curiosity to gratify at Church,  
 and so chose to stay at home. How, said  
*Euphranor*, are they then Dissenters? No,  
 replied *Crito*, they are Free-thinkers. *Euphranor*, who had never met with any of  
 this Species or Sect of Men, and but lit-  
 tle of their Writings, shew'd a great De-  
 fire to know their Principles or System.  
 That is more, said *Crito*, than I will un-  
 dertake to tell you. Their Writers are of  
 different Opinions. Some go farther, and  
 explain themselves more freely than others.  
 But the current general Notions of the  
 Sect are best learned from Conversation  
 with those who profess themselves of it.  
 Your Curiosity may now be satisfy'd, if  
 you and *Dion* wou'd spend a Week at my  
 House

House with these Gentlemen, who seem very ready to declare and propagate their Opinions. *Alciphron* is above Forty, and no stranger either to Men or Books. I knew him first at the Temple, which, upon an Estate's falling to him, he quitted, to travel through the polite parts of *Europe*. Since his Return he hath lived in the Amusements of the Town, which being grown stale and tasteless to his Palate, have flung him into a sort of splenetic Indolence. The young Gentleman, *Lyficles*, is a near Kinsman of mine, one of lively Parts, and a general Insight into Letters, who, after having passed the Forms of Education, and seen a little of the World, fell into an Intimacy with Men of Pleasure, and Free-thinkers, I am afraid much to the damage of his Constitution and his Fortune. But what I most regret, is the Corruption of his Mind by a Set of pernicious Principles, which, having been observed to survive the Passions of Youth, forestal even the remote Hopes of Amendment. They are both Men of Fashion, and wou'd be agreeable enough, if they did not fancy themselves Free-thinkers. But this, to speak the Truth, has given them a certain Air and Manner, which a little too visibly declare they think themselves wiser than the rest of the World.



DIAL. I shou'd therefore be not at all displeased  
 I. if my Guests met with their Match,  
 where they least expected it, in a Country  
 Farmer. I shall not, replied *Euphranor*,  
 pretend to any more than barely to inform  
 my self of their Principles and Opinions.  
 For this end I propose to-morrow to set a  
 Week's Task to my Labourers, and ac-  
 cept your Invitation, if *Dion* thinks good.  
 To which I gave consent. Mean while,  
 said *Crito*, I shall prepare my Guests, and  
 let them know that an honest Neighbour  
 hath a mind to discourse them on the Sub-  
 ject of their Free-thinking. And, if I am  
 not much mistaken, they will please them-  
 selves with the Prospect of leaving a Con-  
 vert behind them, even in a Country Vil-  
 lage. Next Morning *Euphranor* rose ear-  
 ly, and spent the Forenoon in ordering his  
 Affairs. After Dinner we took our Walk  
 to *Crito's*, which lay through half a do-  
 zen pleasant Fields planted round with  
 Plane-trees, that are very common in this  
 part of the Country. We walked under  
 the delicious Shade of these Trees for a-  
 bout an Hour before we came to *Crito's*  
 House, which stands in the middle of a  
 small Park, beautify'd with two fine  
 Groves of Oak and Walnut, and a wind-  
 ing Stream of sweet and clear Water. We  
 met a Servant at the Door with a small  
 Basket

Basket of Fruit which he was carrying DIAL.  
 into a Grove, where he said his Master I.  
 was with the two Strangers. We found  
 them all three sitting under a Shade. And  
 after the usual Forms at first meeting, *Euphranor* and I sat down by them. Our  
 Conversation began upon the Beauty of  
 this rural Scene, the fine Season of the  
 Year, and some late Improvements which  
 had been made in the adjacent Country  
 by new Methods of Agriculture. Whence  
*Alciphron* took occasion to observe, That  
 the most valuable Improvements came la-  
 test. I should have small Temptation,  
 said he, to live where Men have neither  
 polished Manners, nor improved Minds,  
 though the Face of the Country were ever  
 so well improved. But I have long ob-  
 served, that there is a gradual Progress in  
 humane Affairs. The first Care of Man-  
 kind is to supply the Cravings of Nature;  
 in the next place they study the Conve-  
 niencies and Comforts of Life. But the  
 subduing Prejudices, and acquiring true  
 Knowledge, that *Herculean* Labour is the  
 last, being what demands the most perfect  
 Abilities, and to which all other Advan-  
 tages are preparative. Right, said *Euphra-*  
*nor*, *Alciphron* hath touched our true Defect.  
 It was always my Opinion, That as soon  
 as we had provided Subsistence for the Bo-

DIAL. dy, our next Care should be to improve  
 I. the Mind. But the Desire of Wealth steps  
 between and engrosseth Mens Thoughts.

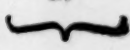
II. *ALC.* Thought is that which we are told distinguisheth Man from Beast; and Freedom of Thought makes as great a difference between Man and Man. It is to the noble Asserters of this Privilege and Perfection of Humane kind, the Free-thinkers I mean, who have sprung up and multiplied of late Years, that we are indebted for all those important Discoveries, that Ocean of Light which hath broke in and made its way, in spite of Slavery and Superstition. *Euphranor*, who is a sincere Enemy to both, testified a great Esteem for those Worthies who had preserved their Country from being ruined by them, having spread so much Light and Knowledge over the Land. He added, That he liked the Name and Character of a Free-thinker: but in his Sense of the Word, every honest Inquirer after Truth in any Age or Country was intitled to it. He therefore desired to know what this Sect was that *Alciphron* had spoken of as newly sprung up; what were their Tenets; what were their Discoveries; and wherein they employ'd themselves, for the benefit of Mankind? Of all which, he  
 shou'd

shou'd think himself obliged, if *Alciphron* DIAL.  
 wou'd inform him. That I shall very I.  
 easily, replied *Alciphron*, for I profess my  
 self one of the number, and my most intimate  
 Friends are some of the most considerable  
 among them. And perceiving that *Euphranor*  
 heard him with respect, he proceeded very  
 fluently. You must know, said he, that the  
 mind of Man may be fitly compared to a  
 piece of Land. What stubbing, plowing,  
 digging and harrowing is to the one, that  
 thinking, reflecting, examining is to the  
 other. Each hath its proper culture; and as  
 Land that is suffered to lie waste and wild  
 for a long tract of time will be overspread  
 with brush-wood, brambles, thorns and such  
 vegetables which have neither use nor beauty;  
 even so there will not fail to sprout up in  
 a neglected uncultivated mind, a great  
 number of prejudices and absurd opinions,  
 which owe their origin partly to the Soil it  
 self, the passions and imperfections of the  
 mind of Man, and partly to those Seeds  
 which chance to be scattered in it by every  
 wind of Doctrine, which the cunning of  
 Statesmen, the singularity of Pedants, the  
 superstition of Fools or the imposture of  
 Priests shall raise. Represent to your self  
 the mind of Man or Humane Nature in  
 general, that  
for



DIAL. for so many ages had lain obnoxious to  
 I. the frauds of designing and the follies of  
 weak Men. How it must be over-run  
 with prejudices and errours, what firm  
 and deep Roots they must have taken, and  
 consequently how difficult a task it must be  
 to extirpate them? And yet this work no  
 less difficult than glorious is the employ-  
 ment of the modern Free-thinkers. *Alci-  
 phron* having said this made a pause and  
 looked round on the Company. Truly,  
 said I, a very laudable undertaking! We  
 think said *Euphranor* that it is praise-  
 worthy to clear and subdue the earth, to  
 tame brute Animals, to fashion the out-  
 sides of Men, provide sustenance for their  
 Bodies, and cure their Maladies. But what  
 is all this in comparison of that most  
 excellent and useful undertaking to free  
 Mankind from their errours, and to im-  
 prove and adorn their minds? For things  
 of less merit towards the world, Altars  
 have been raised and Temples built in  
 ancient times. Too many in our days,  
 replied *Alciphron*, are such Fools as not  
 to know their best Benefactors from their  
 worst Enemies. They have a blind re-  
 spect for those who enslave them, and  
 look upon their Deliverers as a dangerous  
 sort of Men that wou'd undermine re-  
 ceived Principles and Opinions. *EUPH.*  
 It



It were a great pity such worthy ingenious DIAL.  
 Men shou'd meet with any discouragement. I.  
 For my part I shou'd think, a Man   
 who spent his time in such a painful impartial search after Truth a better friend to  
 Mankind than the greatest Statesman or  
 Hero, the advantage of whose Labours  
 is confined to a little part of the world,  
 and a short space of time, whereas a Ray  
 of Truth may enlighten the whole world  
 and extend to future ages. *ALC.* It will  
 be some time I fear before the common  
 herd think as you do. But the better  
 sort, the Men of parts and polite Education pay a due regard to the Patrons of  
 Light and Truth.

III. *EUPH.* The Clergy no doubt are on  
 all occasions ready to forward and applaud  
 your worthy endeavours. Upon hearing  
 this *Lyficles* cou'd hardly refrain from  
 laughing. And *Alciphron* with an air of  
 pity told *Euphranor* that he perceived he  
 was unacquainted with the real character  
 of those Men. For, saith he, you must  
 know that of all Men living they are our  
 greatest Enemies. If it were possible  
 they wou'd extinguish the very light of  
 nature, turn the world into a dungeon,  
 and keep mankind for ever in Chains and  
 darkness. *EUPH.* I never imagined any  
 thing

DIAL. thing like this of our Protestant Clergy,

I. particularly those of the established Church, whom, if I may be allowed to judge by what I have seen of them and their writings, I shou'd have thought lovers of learning and useful knowledge.

ALC. Take my word for it, Priests of all Religions are the same, wherever there are Priests there will be Priestcraft, and wherever there is Priestcraft there will be a persecuting Spirit, which they never fail to exert to the utmost of their power against all those who have the courage to think for themselves, and will not submit to be hoodwinked and manacled by their Reverend leaders. Those great Masters of Pedantry and Jargon have coined several Systems, which are all equally true and of equal importance to the world. The contending Sects are each alike fond of their own, and alike prone to discharge their fury upon all who dissent from them. Cruelty and Ambition being the darling vices of Priests and Churchmen all the world over, they endeavour in all Countries to get an ascendant over the rest of mankind, and the Magistrate having a joint interest with the Priest in subduing, amusing, and scaring the People, too often lends a hand to the Hierarchy, who never think their authority and possessions secure, so long as those  
who

who differ from them in opinion are allowed to partake even in the common rights belonging to their birth or species. DIAL.  
I.

To represent the matter in a true light, figure to your selves a monster or spectre made up of Superstition and Enthusiasm, the joint issue of Statecraft and Priestcraft, rattling chains in one hand and with the other brandishing a flaming Sword over the Land, and menacing destruction to all who shall dare to follow the dictates of Reason and Common Sense. Do but consider this, and then say if there was not danger as well as difficulty in our undertaking. Yet, such is the generous ardour that Truth inspires, our Free-thinkers are neither overcome by the one nor daunted by the other. In spite of both we have already made so many Profelytes among the better sort, and their numbers increase so fast, that we hope we shall be able to carry all before us, beat down the Bulwarks of all Tyranny Secular or Ecclesiastical, break the Fetters and Chains of our Countrymen, and restore the original inherent Rights, Liberties, and Prerogatives of Mankind. *Euphranor* heard this discourse with his mouth open and his eyes fixed upon *Alciphron*, who, having uttered it with no small emotion, stopt to draw breath and recover himself;  
But

DIAL. But finding that no body made answer he

I. resumed the thread of his discourse, and  
 turning to *Euphranor* spoke in a lower note  
 what follows. The more innocent and honest a Man is, the more liable is he to be imposed on by the specious pretences of other Men. You have probably met with certain writings of our Divines that treat of grace, vertue, goodness and such matters fit to amuse and deceive a simple honest mind. But believe me when I tell you they are all at bottom (however they may gild their designs) united by one common principle in the same Interest. I will not deny there may be here and there a poor half-witted Man that means no mischief; but this I will be bold to say that all the Men of Sense among them are true at bottom to these three pursuits of ambition, avarice and revenge.

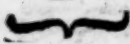
IV. While *Alciphron* was speaking, a Servant came to tell him and *Lyficles*, that some Men who were going to *London* waited to receive their orders. Whereupon they both rose up and went towards the house. They were no sooner gone, but *Euphranor* addressing himself to *Crito* said, he believed that poor Gentleman had been a great sufferer for his Free-thinking, for that he seemed to express himself with  
 the



the passion and Resentment natural to Men DIAL.  
who have received very bad usage. I be- I.  
lieve no such thing, answered *Crito*, but  
have often observed those of his Sect run  
into two faults of conversation, declaim-  
ing and bantering, just as the tragic or the  
comic humour prevails. Sometimes they  
work themselves into high passions and  
are frightened at Spectres of their own  
raising. In those fits every Country Cu-  
rate passes for an Inquisitor. At other  
times they affect a sly facetious manner,  
making use of hints and allusions, ex-  
pressing little, insinuating much, and upon  
the whole seeming to divert themselves  
with the Subject and their Adversaries.  
But if you wou'd know their opinions  
you must make them speak out and keep  
close to the point. Persecution for Free-  
thinking is a topic they are apt to enlarge  
on though without any just cause, every  
one being at full liberty to think what  
he pleases, there being no such thing in  
*England* that I know as Persecution for  
opinion, sentiment, or thought. But in every  
Country, I suppose, some care is taken to  
restrain petulant Speech, and, whatever  
Mens inward thoughts may be, to dis-  
courage an outward contempt of what  
the public esteemeth Sacred. Whether  
this care in *England* hath of late been so  
excessive,



DIAL. excessive, as to distress the Subjects of this

I.  once free and easy Government, whether the Free-thinkers can truly complain of any hardship upon the score of conscience or opinion, you will better be able to judge, when you hear from themselves an account of the numbers, progress and notions of their Sect: which I doubt not they will communicate fully and freely, provided no body present seem shocked or offended. For in that case it is possible good manners may put them upon some reserve. Oh! said *Euphranor*, I am never angry with any Man for his opinion whether he be *Jew*, *Turk* or *Idolater*, he may speak his mind freely to me without fear of offending. I shou'd even be glad to hear what he hath to say, provided he saith it in an ingenuous candid manner. Whoever digs in the Mine of Truth I look on as my Fellow-labourer, but if, while I am taking true pains, he diverts himself with teizing me and flinging dust in mine Eyes, I shall soon be tired of him.

V. In the mean time *Alciphron* and *Lyficles* having dispatched what they went about returned to us. *Lyficles* sat down where he had been before. But *Alciphron* stood over-against us, with his arms folded across, and his head reclined on the left shoulder

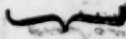
shoulder in the posture of a Man meditating. We fate silent not to disturb his thoughts ; and after two or three Minutes he uttered these words, oh Truth! oh Liberty! after which he remained musing as before. Upon this *Euphranor* took the freedom to interrupt him. *Alciphron*, said he, it is not fair to spend your time in Soliloquies. The conversation of learned and knowing Men is rarely to be met with in this corner, and the opportunity you have put into my Hands I value too much, not to make the best use of it. *ALC.* Are you then in earnest a Votary of Truth, and is it possible you shou'd bear the liberty of a fair Inquiry? *EUPH.* It is what I desire of all things. *ALC.* What! upon every Subject? upon the notions you first sucked in with your Milk, and which have been ever since nursed by parents, pastors, tutors, religious assemblies, books of Devotion and such methods of prepossessing Mens minds. *EUPH.* I love information upon all Subjects that come in my way, and especially upon those that are most important. *ALC.* If then you are in earnest hold fair and stand firm, while I probe your prejudices and extirpate your principles.

*Dum veteres avias tibi de pulmone revello.*

C

Having

DIAL. Having said thus, *Alciphron* knit his brows  
I. and made a short pause, after which he  
proceeded in the following manner. If  
we are at the pains to dive and penetrate  
into the bottom of things, and analyse  
Opinions into their first principles, we  
shall find that those Opinions which are  
thought of greatest consequence have the  
slightest original, being derived either  
from the casual customs of the Country  
where we live, or from early instruction  
instilled into our tender minds, before we  
are able to discern between right and  
wrong, true and false. The Vulgar (by  
whom I understand all those who do not  
make a free use of their Reason) are apt to  
take these prejudices for things sacred and  
unquestionable, believing them to be im-  
printed on the hearts of Men by God  
himself, or convey'd by Revelation from  
Heaven, or to carry with them so great  
light and evidence as must force an assent  
without any inquiry or examination.  
Thus the shallow Vulgar have their heads  
furnished with sundry conceits, principles  
and doctrines, religious, moral and political,  
all which they maintain with a zeal pro-  
portionable to their want of Reason. On  
the other hand, those who duly employ  
their faculties in the search of Truth, take  
especial care to weed out of their minds  
and

and extirpate all such notions or prejudices DIAL.  
as were planted in them before they ar- I.  
rived at the free and intire use of Reason. 

This difficult task hath been successfully performed by our modern Free-thinkers, who have not only dissected with great Sagacity the received Systemes, and traced every established prejudice to the fountain-head, the true and genuine motives of assent: But also, having been able to embrace in one comprehensive view the several parts and ages of the World, they observed a wonderful variety of Customs and Rites, of Institutions Religious and Civil, of Notions and Opinions very unlike and even contrary one to another: A certain sign they cannot all be true. And yet they are all maintained by their several Partisans with the same positive air and warm zeal, and if examined will be found to bottom on one and the same Foundation, the strength of prejudice. By the help of these Remarks and Discoveries, they have broke through the bands of popular Custom, and having freed themselves from Imposture do now generously lend a hand to their Fellow Subjects, to lead them into the same paths of Light and Liberty. Thus, Gentlemen, I have given you a summary account of the views and endeavours of those Men who



DIAL. are called Free-thinkers. If in the course of  
I. what I have said or shall say hereafter, there  
be some things contrary to your pre-con-  
ceived Opinions, and therefore shocking  
and disagreeable, you will pardon the free-  
dom and plainness of a Philosopher, and  
consider that, whatever displeasure I give  
you of that kind, I do it in strict regard  
to Truth and Obedience to your own  
commands. I am very sensible, that Eyes  
long kept in the dark cannot bear a sud-  
den view of noon day light, but must be  
brought to it by degrees. It is for this  
Reason, the ingenious Gentlemen of our  
Profession are accustomed to proceed gra-  
dually, beginning with those prejudices to  
which Men have the least Attachment,  
and thence proceeding to undermine the  
rest by slow and insensible degrees, till  
they have demolished the whole Fabric  
of Humane Folly and Superstition. But  
the little time I can propose to spend here  
obligeth me to take a shorter course, and  
be more direct and plain than possibly  
may be thought to suit with Prudence  
and good Manners. Upon this, we as-  
sured him he was at full liberty to speak  
his mind of Things, Persons and Opini-  
ons without the least reserve. It is a  
liberty, replied *Alciphron*, that we Free-  
thinkers are equally willing to give and  
take



take. We love to call things by their right Names, and cannot endure that Truth shou'd suffer through Complaisance. Let us therefore lay it down for a Preliminary, that no offence be taken at any thing whatsoever shall be said on either side. To which we all agreed.

DIAL.  
I.

VI. In order then, said *Alciphron*, to find out the Truth, we will suppose that I am bred up, for instance in the Church of *England*. When I come to maturity of Judgment and reflect on the particular Worship and Opinions of this Church, I do not remember when or by what means they first took possession of my mind, but there I find them from time immemorial. Then casting an Eye on the Education of Children, from whence I can make a judgment of my own, I observe they are instructed in religious matters before they can reason about them, and consequently that all such instruction is nothing else but filling the tender mind of a Child with prejudices. I do therefore reject all those religious notions, which I consider as the other Follies of my Childhood. I am confirmed in this way of thinking, when I look abroad into the World, where I observe Papists and several Sects of Dissenters which do all

DIAL. agree in a general profession of Belief in  
 I. Christ, but differ vastly one from another  
 in the particulars of Faith and Worship. I then enlarge my view so as to take in  
*Jews* and *Mahometans*, between whom and the Christians I perceive indeed some small agreement in the Belief of one God; but then they have each their distinct Laws and Revelations, for which they express the same regard. But extending my view still further to Heathenish and Idolatrous Nations I discover an endless variety, not only in particular Opinions and Modes of Worship, but even in the very notion of a Deity, wherein they widely differ one from another, and from all the forementioned Sects. Upon the whole, instead of Truth simple and uniform I perceive nothing but Discord, Opposition and wild Pretensions, all springing from the same source to wit the prejudice of Education. From such reasonings and reflections as these, thinking Men have concluded that all Religions are alike false and fabulous. One is a Christian, another a Jew, a third a Mahometan, a fourth an Idolatrous Gentile, but all from one and the same reason, because they happen to be bred up each in his respective Sect. In the same manner, therefore, as each of these contending Parties condemns the rest,

rest, so an unprejudiced stander-by will DIAL.  
condemn and reject them all together, ob- I.  
serving that they all draw their origin  
from the same fallacious Principle, and  
are carried on by the same Artifice to an-  
swer the same ends of the Priest and the  
Magistrate.

VII. *EUPH.* You hold then that the Magistrate concurs with the Priest in imposing on the People. *ALC.* I do, and so must every one who considers things in a true light. For you must know, the Magistrates principal aim is to keep the People under him in awe. Now the public Eye restrains Men from open Offences against the Laws and Government. But to prevent secret Transgressions a Magistrate finds it expedient, that Men shou'd believe there is an Eye of Providence watching over their private Actions and Designs. And, to intimidate those who might otherwise be drawn into Crimes by the prospect of Pleasure and Profit, he gives them to understand, that whoever escapes Punishment in this Life will be sure to find it in the next, and that so heavy and lasting as infinitely to overbalance the Pleasure and Profit accruing from his Crimes. Hence the Belief of a God, the Immortality of the Soul, and a  
C 4 future

DIAL. future state of Rewards and Punishments

I. have been esteemed useful Engines of Government. And to the end that these notional airy Doctrines might make a sensible impression, and be retained on the minds of Men, skilful Rulers have in the several civilized Nations of the Earth devised Temples, Sacrifices, Churches, Rites, Ceremonies, Habits, Music, Prayer, Preaching, and the like spiritual trumpery, whereby the Priest maketh temporal gains, and the Magistrate findeth his account in frightening and subduing the People. This is the original of the Combination between Church and State, of Religion by Law established, of rights, immunities and incomes of Priests all over the World: There being no Government but wou'd have you fear God that you may honour the King or civil Power. And you will ever observe that politic Princes keep up a good understanding with their Clergy, to the end that they in return, by inculcating Religion and Loyalty into the minds of the People, may render them tame, timorous and slavish. *Crito* and I heard this Discourse of *Alciphron* with the utmost attention, though without any appearance of surprize, there being indeed nothing in it to us new or unexpected. But *Euphranor*,  
who



who had never before been present at such Conversation, cou'd not help shewing some Astonishment, which *Lyficles* observing, asked him with a lively Air, how he liked *Alciphron's* Lecture. It is, said he, the first I believe that you ever heard of the kind, and requireth a strong Stomach to digest it. *EUPH.* I will own to you that my Digestion is none of the quickest; but it hath sometimes, by degrees, been able to master things which at first appeared indigestible. At present I admire the free Spirit and Eloquence of *Alciphron*, but, to speak the Truth, I am rather astonished, than convinced of the Truth of his Opinions. How (said he turning to *Alciphron*) is it then possible you shou'd not believe the Being of a God? *ALC.* To be plain with you, I do not.

VIII. But this is what I foresaw, a Flood of Light let in at once upon the Mind being apt to dazzle and disorder, rather than enlighten it. Was I not pinched in Time, the regular way would be to have begun with the Circumstantials of Religion, next to have attacked the Mysteries of Christianity, after that proceeded to the practical Doctrines, and in the last place to have extirpated that  
which

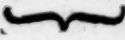


DIAL. which of all other religious Prejudices,  
 I. being the first taught, and Basis of the  
 rest, hath taken the deepest root in our  
 Minds, I mean the Belief of a God. I  
 do not wonder it sticks with you, ha-  
 ving known several very ingenious Men  
 who found it difficult to free themselves  
 from this Prejudice. EUPH. All Men  
 have not the same Alacrity and Vigour in  
 thinking: for my own part, I find it  
 a hard matter to keep pace with you.  
 ALC. To help you, I will go a little  
 way back, and resume the Thread of my  
 Reasoning. First I must acquaint you,  
 That having applied my Mind to con-  
 template the Idea of Truth, I discovered  
 it to be of a stable, permanent, and uni-  
 form nature; not various and changeable,  
 like Modes or Fashions, and things de-  
 pending on Fancy. In the next place,  
 having observed several Sects, and Subdi-  
 visions of Sects espousing very different  
 and contrary Opinions, and yet all pro-  
 fessing Christianity, I rejected those Points  
 wherein they differed, retaining only that  
 which was agreed to by all, and so be-  
 came a *Latitudinarian*. Having after-  
 wards, upon a more enlarged View of  
 things, perceived that Christians, Jews,  
 and Mahometans had each their different  
 Systems of Faith, agreeing only in the Be-  
 lief

lief of one God, I became a *Deist*. Lastly, DIAL.  
 extending my View to all the other va- I.  
 rious Nations which inhabit this Globe, ~  
 and finding they agreed in no one Point  
 of Faith, but differed one from another,  
 as well as from the forementioned Sects,  
 even in the Notion of a God, in which  
 there is as great Diversity as in the Me-  
 thods of Worship, I thereupon became  
 an *Atheist*: it being my Opinion that a  
 Man of Courage and Sense shou'd follow  
 his Argument wherever it leads him, and  
 that nothing is more ridiculous than to  
 be a Free-thinker by halves. I approve  
 the Man who makes thorough Work, and  
 not content with lopping off the Branches,  
 extirpates the very Root from which they  
 sprung.

IX. Atheism therefore, that Bugbear of  
 Women and Fools, is the very Top and  
 Perfection of Free-thinking. It is the  
 grand *Arcanum* to which a true Genius  
 naturally riseth, by a certain Climax or  
 Gradation of Thought, and without which  
 he can never possess his Soul in absolute  
 Liberty and Repose. For your thorough  
 Conviction in this main Article, do but  
 examine the Notion of a God with the  
 same Freedom that you would other Pre-  
 judices, Trace it to the fountain-head,  
and

DIAL. and you shall not find that you had it by

I.  any of your Senses, the only true means of discovering what is real and substantial in Nature: You will find it lying amongst other old Lumber in some obscure corner of the Imagination, the proper Receptacle of Visions, Fancies, and Prejudices of all kinds; and if you are more attached to this than the rest, it is only because it is the oldest. This is all, take my Word for it, and not mine only, but that of many more the most ingenious Men of the Age, who, I can assure you, think as I do on the Subject of a Deity. Though some of them hold it proper, to proceed with more Reserve in declaring to the World their Opinion in this Particular, than in most others. And it must be owned, there are still too many in *England* who retain a foolish Prejudice against the Name of Atheist. But it lessens every Day among the better sort: and when it is quite worn out, our Free-thinkers may then, (and not till then) be said to have given the finishing Stroke to Religion; it being evident that so long as the Existence of God is believed, Religion must subsist in some Shape or other. But the Root being once plucked up, the Scions which shot from it will of course wither and decay. Such  
are

are all those whimsical Notions of Con-  
 science, Duty, Principle, and the like, which fill a Man's Head with Scruples, awe him with Fears, and make him a more thorough Slave than the Horse he rides. A Man had better a thousand times be hunted by Bailiffs or Messengers than haunted by these Spectres, which embarrass and embitter all his Pleasures, creating the most real and sore Servitude upon Earth. But the Free-thinker, with a vigorous flight of Thought breaks through those airy Springes, and asserts his original Independency. Others indeed may talk, and write, and fight about Liberty, and make an outward Pretence to it, but the Free-thinker alone is truly free. *Alciphron* having ended this Discourse with an Air of Triumph, *Euphranor* spoke to him in the following manner. You make clear Work. The Gentlemen of your Profession are, it seems, admirable Weeders. You have rooted up a world of Notions, I shou'd be glad to see what fine things you have planted in their stead. *ALC.* Have Patience, good *Euphranor*. I will shew you in the first place, That whatever was sound and good we leave untouched, and encourage it to grow in the Mind of Man. And secondly, I will shew you what

D I A L.  
I.



DIAL. what excellent things we have planted

I. in it. You must know then, that pursuing our close and severe Scrutiny, we do at last arrive at something solid and real, in which all Mankind agree, to wit, the Appetites, Passions, and Senses: These are founded in Nature, are real, have real Objects, and are attended with real and substantial Pleasures; Food, Drink, Sleep, and the like animal Enjoyments being what all Men like and love. And if we extend our view to the other kinds of Animals, we shall find them all agree in this, that they have certain natural Appetites and Senses, in the gratifying and satisfying of which they are constantly employ'd. Now these real natural good things which include nothing of Notion or Fancy, we are so far from destroying, that we do all we can to cherish and improve them. According to us, every wise Man looks upon himself, or his own bodily Existence in this present World, as the Center and ultimate End of all his Actions and Regards. He considers his Appetites as natural Guides directing to his proper Good, his Passions and Senses as the natural true Means of enjoying this Good. Hence he endeavours to keep his Appetites in high Relish, his Passions and Senses strong  
and

and lively, and to provide the greatest Quantity and Variety of real Objects suited to them, which he studieth to enjoy by all possible means, and in the highest Perfection imaginable. And the Man who can do this without Restraint, Remorse, or Fear, is as happy as any other Animal whatsoever, or as his Nature is capable of being. Thus I have given you a succinct View of the Principles, Discoveries, and Tenets of the select Spirits of this enlightned Age.

DIAL.  
I.

X. *Crito* remarked, that *Alciphron* had spoke his Mind with great Clearness. Yes, replied *Euphranor*, we are obliged to the Gentleman for letting us at once into the Tenets of his Sect. But, if I may be allowed to speak my Mind, *Alciphron*, though in compliance with my own Request, hath given me no small Uneasiness. You need, said *Alciphron*, make no Apology for speaking freely what you think to one who professeth himself a Free-thinker. I shou'd be sorry to make one, whom I meant to oblige, uneasy. Pray let me know wherein I have offended. I am half ashamed, replied *Euphranor*, to own that I who am no great Genius have a Weakness incidental to little ones. I wou'd say that  
I have

DIAL. I have favourite Opinions, which you represent to be Errors and Prejudices. For

I.

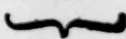
Instance, the Immortality of the Soul is a Notion I am fond of, as what supports the Mind with a very pleasing Prospect. And if it be an Error, I shou'd perhaps be of *Tully's* Mind, who in that Case professed he shou'd be sorry to know the Truth, acknowledging no sort of Obligation to certain Philosophers in his Days, who taught the Soul of Man was mortal. They were, it seems, Predecessors to those who are now called Free-thinkers; which Name being too general and indefinite, inasmuch as it comprehends all those who think for themselves, whether they agree in Opinion with these Gentlemen or no, it shou'd not seem amiss to assign them a specific Appellation or peculiar Name, whereby to distinguish them from other Philosophers, at least in our present Conference. For I cannot bear to argue against Free-thinking and Free-thinkers. *ALC.* In the Eyes of a wise Man Words are of small moment. We do not think Truth attached to a Name. *EUPH.* If you please then, to avoid Confusion, let us call your Sect by the same Name that *Tully* (who understood the force of Language) bestow'd upon them. *ALC.* With all

all my heart. Pray what may that Name DIAL.  
be? *EUPH.* Why, he calls them *Minute Philosophers*. Right, said *Crito*, the I.  
modern Free-thinkers are the very same  
with those *Cicero* called Minute Philosophers, which Name admirably suits them,  
they being a sort of Sect which diminish all the most valuable things, the  
thoughts, views, and hopes of Men;  
all the Knowledge, Notions, and Theories of the Mind they reduce to Sense;  
Humane Nature they contract and degrade  
to the narrow low Standard of Animal  
Life, and assign us only a small pittance  
of Time instead of Immortality. *Alci-  
phron* very gravely remarked, That the  
Gentlemen of his Sect had done no injury to Man, and that if he be a little,  
shortlived, contemptible Animal, it was  
not their saying it made him so: And  
they were no more to blame for whatever defects they discover, than a faithful  
Glas for making the wrinkles which  
it only shews. As to what you observe,  
said he, of those we now call Free-thinkers having been anciently termed  
*Minute Philosophers*, it is my opinion  
this Appellation might be derived from  
their considering things minutely, and  
not swallowing them in the gross, as other Men are used to do. Besides, we  
D all



DIAL. all know the best Eyes are necessary to  
I. discern the minutest Objects: It seems  
therefore, that Minute Philosophers might  
have been so called from their distinguished perspicacity. EUPH. O *Alci-phron*! these Minute Philosophers (since that is their true Name) are a sort of Pirates who plunder all that come in their way. I consider my self as a Man left stript and desolate on a bleak Beach.

XI. But who are these profound and learned Men that of late Years have demolished the whole Fabric which Law-givers, Philosophers and Divines had been erecting for so many Ages? *Lyficles* hearing these words, smiled, and said he believed *Euphranor* had figured to himself Philosophers in square caps and long gowns: but, thanks to these happy Times, the Reign of Pedantry was over. Our Philosophers, said he, are of a very different kind from those aukward Students, who think to come at Knowledge by poring on dead Languages, and old Authors, or by sequestering themselves from the Cares of the World to meditate in Solitude and Retirement. They are the best bred Men of the Age, Men who know the World, Men of pleasure, Men of fashion, and fine Gentlemen.  
EUPH.

*EUPH.* I have some small notion of *DIAL.*  
the People you mention, but shou'd ne- I.  
ver have taken them for Philosophers. 

*CRI.* Nor wou'd any one else till of late. The World it seems was long under a mistake about the way to Knowledge, thinking it lay through a tedious course of Academical Education and Study. But among the Discoveries of the present Age, one of the principal is the finding out that such a Method doth rather retard and obstruct, than promote Knowledge. *ALC.* Academical Study may be comprised in two points, Reading and Meditation. Their Reading is chiefly employ'd on ancient Authors in dead Languages: so that a great part of their Time is spent in learning Words; which, when they have mastered with infinite pains, what do they get by it but old and obsolete Notions, that are now quite exploded and out of use? Then, as to their Meditations, what can they possibly be good for? He that wants the proper Materials of Thought, may think and meditate for ever to no purpose: Those Cobwebs spun by Scholars out of their own Brains being alike unserviceable, either for Use or Ornament. Proper Ideas or Materials are only to be got by frequenting good Company.

**DIAL.** pany. I know several Gentlemen, who, since their Appearance in the World, have spent as much time in rubbing off the rust and pedantry of a College Education, as they had done before in acquiring it. *LYS.* I'll undertake, a Lad of fourteen, bred in the modern way, shall make a better Figure, and be more considered in any Drawing-Room or Assembly of polite People, than one of four and twenty, who hath lain by a long time at School and College. He shall say better things, in a better manner, and be more liked by good Judges. *EUPH.* Where doth he pick up all this Improvement? *CRI.* Where our grave Ancestors wou'd never have look'd for it, in a Drawing-Room, a Coffee-House, a Chocolate-House, at the Tavern, or Groom-Porter's. In these and the like fashionable Places of Resort, it is the Custom for polite Persons to speak freely on all Subjects, religious, moral, or political. So that a young Gentleman who frequents them is in the way of hearing many instructive Lectures, seasoned with Wit and Raillery, and uttered with Spirit. Three or four Sentences from a Man of quality spoke with a good Air, make more Impression, and convey more Knowledge, than a dozen  
Differ-

Differtations in a dry Academical way. **DIAL.**

**EUPH.** There is then no Method **I.**  
or Course of Studies in those Places.

**LVS.** None but an easy free Conversation, which takes in every thing that offers, without any Rule or Design. **EUPH.** I always thought that some Order was necessary to attain any useful degree of Knowledge, that Haste and Confusion beget a conceited Ignorance, that to make our Advances sure, they shou'd be gradual, and those Points first learned which might cast a light on what was to follow. **ALC.** So long as Learning was to be obtained only by that slow formal course of Study, few of the better sort knew much of it; but now it is grown an Amusement, our young Gentry and Nobility imbibe it insensibly amidst their Diversions, and make a considerable Progress. **EUPH.** Hence probably the great number of Minute Philosophers. **CRI.** It is to this that Sect is owing for so many ingenious Proficients of both Sexes. You may now commonly see (what no former Age ever saw) a young Lady, or a *Petit Maitre* nonplus a Divine or an old-fashioned Gentleman, who hath read many a *Greek* and *Latin* Author, and spent much Time in hard methodical Study. **EUPH.** It shou'd seem then that Method,



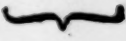
DIAL. thod, Exactness, and Industry are a Dis-

I. advantage. Here *Alciphron*, turning to  
 ~~~~~ *Lyficles*, said he cou'd make the point  
 very clear, if *Euphranor* had any notion  
 of Painting. *EUPH.* I never saw a  
 first-rate Picture in my Life, but have a  
 tolerable Collection of Prints, and have  
 seen some good Drawings. *ALC.* You  
 know then the difference between the  
*Dutch* and the *Italian* manner. *EUPH.* I  
 have some notion of it. *ALC.* Sup-  
 pose now a Drawing finished by the  
 nice and laborious Touches of a *Dutch*  
 Pencil, and another off-hand scratched  
 out in the free manner of a great *Ita-*  
*lian* Master. The *Dutch* Piece, which  
 hath cost so much pains and time will  
 be exact indeed, but without that Force,  
 Spirit, or Grace, which appear in the o-  
 ther, and are the Effects of an easy free  
 Pencil. Do but apply this, and the  
 Point will be clear. *EUPH.* Pray in-  
 form me, did those great *Italian* Masters  
 begin and proceed in their Art without  
 any choice of Method or Subject, and  
 always draw with the same ease and  
 freedom? Or did they observe some  
 Method, beginning with simple and ele-  
 mentary parts, an Eye, a Nose, a Finger,  
 which they drew with great pains and  
 care, often drawing the same thing, in  
 order

order to draw it correctly, and so proceeding with Patience and Industry, till after a considerable length of Time they arrived at the free masterly manner you speak of. If this were the Case, I leave you to make the Application. *ALC.* You may dispute the Matter if you please. But a Man of parts is one thing, and a Pedant another. Pains and Method may do for some sort of People. A Man must be a long time kindling wet Straw into a vile smothering Flame, but Spirits blaze out at once. *EUPH.* The Minute Philosophers have, it seems, better Parts than other Men, which qualifies them for a different Education. *ALC.* Tell me, *Euphranor*, what is it that gives one Man a better Mien than another; more Politeness in Dress, Speech, and Motion? Nothing but frequenting good Company. By the same means Men get insensibly a delicate Taste, a refined Judgment, a certain Politeness in thinking and expressing one's self. No wonder if you Countrymen are strangers to the Advantage of polite Conversation, which constantly keeps the Mind awake and active, exercising its Faculties, and calling forth all its Strength and Spirit on a thousand different Occasions and Subjects, that never came in the way of a Book-worm in a College, no

*DIAL.* more than of a Ploughman. *CRI.* Hence

*I.* those lively Faculties, that quickness of  
 ~~~~~ Apprehension, that slyness of Ridicule,  
 that egregious Talent of Wit and Humour which distinguish the Gentlemen of your Profession. *EUPH.* It shou'd seem then that your Sect is made up of what you call fine Gentlemen. *LYS.* Not altogether, for we have among us some contemplative Spirits of a coarser Education, who, from observing the Behaviour and Proceedings of Apprentices, Watermen, Porters, and the Assemblies of Rabble in the Streets, have arrived at a profound Knowledge of Humane Nature, and made great Discoveries about the Principles, Springs, and Motives of moral Actions. These have demolished the received Systems, and done a world of good in the City. *ALC.* I tell you we have Men of all Sorts and Professions, plodding Citizens, thriving Stockjobbers, skilful Men in Business, polite Courtiers, gallant Men of the Army; but our chief Strength and Flower of the Flock are those promising young Men who have the Advantage of a modern Education. These are the growing Hopes of our Sect, by whose Credit and Influence in a few Years we expect to see those great things accomplished that we have in view. *EUPH.* I cou'd never have  
 imagined

imagined your Sect so considerable. *ALC.* DIAL.  
 There are in *England* many honest Folk I.  
 as much in the dark about these matters  
 as your selves. 

XII. To judge of the prevailing Opinion among People of fashion, by what a Senator saith in the House, a Judge upon the Bench, or a Priest in the Pulpit, who all speak according to Law, that is, to the reverend prejudices of our Forefathers, wou'd be wrong. You shou'd go into good Company, and mind what Men of parts and breeding say, those who are best heard and most admired as well in public places of resort, as in private visits. He only who hath these opportunities, can know our real strength, our numbers and the figure that we make.

*EUPH.* By your account there must be many Minute Philosophers among the Men of Rank and Fortune. *ALC.* Take my word for it, not a few, and they do much contribute to the spreading our notions. For he who knows the World must observe, that fashions constantly descend. It is therefore the right way to propagate an Opinion from the upper end. Not to say that the Patronage of such Men is an encouragement to our Authors.

*EUPH.*



DIAL. *EUPH.* It seems then you have Authors

I. among you. *LYS.* That we have several, and those very great Men who have obliged the World with many useful and profound discoveries. *CRI. Moschon* for instance hath proved that Man and Beast are really of the same nature: That consequently a Man need only indulge his Senses and Appetites to be as happy as a Brute. *Gorgias* hath gone further, demonstrating Man to be a piece of Clockwork or Machine: and that Thought or Reason are the same thing as the impulse of one Ball against another. *Cimon* hath made noble use of these discoveries, proving as clearly as any proposition in Mathematics, that conscience is a whim and morality a prejudice: and that a Man is no more accountable for his actions than a Clock is for striking. *Tryphon* hath written irrefragably on the usefulness of vice. *Thrasenor* hath confuted the foolish prejudice Men had against Atheism, shewing that a republick of Atheists might live very happily together. *Demylus* hath made a jest of Loyalty, and convinced the World there is nothing in it: To him and another Philosopher of the same stamp this age is indebted for discovering, that public Spirit is an idle Enthusiasm which  
seizeth

seizeth only on weak minds. It wou'd be DIAL.  
endless to recount the discoveries made I,  
by writers of this Sect. *LYS.* But the Master-piece and finishing Stroke is a  
learned Anecdote of our great *Diagoras*,  
containing a demonstration against the  
Being of God; which it is conceived  
the public is not yet ripe for. But I  
am assured by some judicious Friends who  
have seen it, that it is as clear as Day-  
light, and will do a world of good, at one  
blow demolishing the whole System of  
Religion. These discoveries are published  
by our Philosophers, sometimes in just  
Volumes, but often in Pamphlets and  
loose Papers for their readier conveyance  
through the Kingdom. And to them must  
be ascribed that absolute and independent  
freedom, which groweth so fast to the  
terror of all Bigots. Even the dull and  
ignorant begin to open their Eyes, and  
to be influenced by the example and au-  
thority of so many ingenious Men.  
*EUPH.* It shou'd seem by this account  
that your Sect extend their discoveries  
beyond Religion; and that Loyalty to  
his Prince or Reverence for the Laws are  
but mean things in the Eye of a Minute  
Philosopher. *LYS.* Very mean, we are  
too wise to think there is any thing Sa-  
cred either in King or Constitution, or  
indeed

DIAL. indeed in any thing else. A Man of Sense

I may perhaps seem to pay an occasional regard to his Prince, but this is no more at bottom than what he pays to God when he kneels at the Sacrament to qualify himself for an Office. Fear God, and honour the King, are a pair of slavish maxims, which had for a long time cramped Humane Nature, and awed not only weak minds but even Men of good Understanding, till their Eyes, as I observed before, were opened by our Philosophers. EUPH. Methinks I can easily comprehend that, when the fear of God is quite extinguished, the mind must be very easy with respect to other Duties, which become outward pretences and formalities, from the moment that they quit their hold upon the Conscience, and Conscience always supposeth the Being of a God. But I still thought that *Englishmen* of all denominations (how widely soever they differ as to some particular points) agreed in the Belief of a God, and of so much at least, as is called natural Religion. ALC. I have already told you my own Opinion of those matters, and what I know to be the Opinion of many more. CRI. Probably, *Euphranor*, by the title of *Deists*, which is sometimes given to Minute Philosophers, you have been

been mis-led to imagine they believe and worship a God according to the light of Nature: but by living among them, you may soon be convinced of the contrary. They have neither time nor place, nor form of Divine worship; they offer neither Prayers nor Praises to God in public; and in their private practice shew a contempt or dislike even of the Duties of natural Religion. For instance, the saying grace before and after meals is a plain point of natural worship, and was once universally practised, but in proportion as this Sect prevailed it hath been laid aside, not only by the Minute Philosophers themselves, who wou'd be infinitely ashamed of such a weakness as to beg God's blessing, or give God thanks for their daily Food; but also by others who are afraid of being thought Fools by the Minute Philosophers. *EUPH.* Is it possible that Men, who really believe a God, shou'd yet decline paying so easy and reasonable a Duty for fear of incurring the contempt of Atheists? *CRI.* I tell you there are many, who believing in their Hearts the truth of Religion, are yet afraid or ashamed to own it, lest they shou'd forfeit their Reputation with those who have the good luck to pass for great wits

DIAL.

I.



DIAL. wits and Men of genius. *ALC.* O *Euphranor*, we must make allowance for *Crito's* prejudice: he is a worthy Gentleman and means well. But doth it not look like prejudice to ascribe the respect that is paid our ingenious Free-thinkers rather to good luck than to merit? *EUPH.* I acknowledge their merit to be very wonderful, and that those Authors must needs be great Men who are able to prove such Paradoxes: for example, That so knowing a Man as a Minute Philosopher shou'd be a meer Machine, or at best no better than a Brute. *ALC.* It is a true maxim, that a Man shou'd think with the Learned and speak with the Vulgar. I shou'd be loth to place a Gentleman of merit in such a light, before prejudiced and ignorant Men. The tenets of our Philosophy have this in common with many other Truths, in Metaphysics, Geometry, Astronomy and natural Philosophy, that vulgar ears cannot bear them. All our discoveries and notions are in themselves true and certain; but they are at present known only to the better sort, and wou'd sound strange and odd among the Vulgar. But this, it is to be hoped, will wear off with time. *EUPH.* I do not wonder that vulgar minds shou'd be startled at  
the

the notions of your Philosophy. *CRI. DIAL.*  
Truly a very curious sort of Philosophy,  
and much to be admired ! *I.*

XIII. The profound Thinkers of this way have taken a direct contrary course to all the great Philosophers of former ages, who made it their Endeavour to raise and refine Humane Kind, and remove it as far as possible from the Brute; to moderate and subdue Mens Appetites; to remind them of the dignity of their nature; to awaken and improve their superior Faculties and direct them to the noblest Objects; to possess Mens minds with a high Sense of the Divinity, of the supreme Good, and the Immortality of the Soul. They took great pains to strengthen the Obligations to Vertue, and upon all those Subjects have wrought out noble Theorys, and treated with singular force of Reason. But it seems our Minute Philosophers act the reverse of all other wise and thinking Men; it being their end and aim to erase the Principles of all that is great and good from the mind of Man, to unhinge all order of civil Life, to undermine the foundations of morality, and, instead of improving and ennobling our natures, to bring us down to the maxims and way of thinking  
of

DIAL. of the most uneducated and barbarous

I. nations, and even to degrade Humane  
 Kind to a level with Brute Beasts. And  
 all the while they wou'd pass upon the  
 World for Men of deep Knowledge. But  
 in effect what is all this negative Know-  
 ledge better than downright savage Igno-  
 rance? That there is no Providence, no  
 Spirit, no future State, no moral Duty:  
 truly a fine System for an honest Man to  
 own, or an ingenious Man to value him-  
 self upon! *Alciphron* who heard this  
 discourse with some uneasiness very  
 gravely replied. Disputes are not to be  
 decided by the weight of Authority, but  
 by the force of Reason. You may pass,  
 indeed, general reflexions on our notions,  
 and call them brutal and barbarous if you  
 please: But it is such brutality and such  
 barbarism as few cou'd have attained to  
 if Men of the greatest Genius had not  
 broke the Ice, there being nothing more  
 difficult than to get the the better of Edu-  
 cation, and conquer old prejudices. To  
 remove and cast off a heap of Rubbish  
 that has been gathering upon the Soul  
 from our very infancy, requires great cou-  
 rage and great strength of Faculties.  
 Our Philosophers therefore, do well de-  
 serve the name of *Esprits forts*, *Men of*  
*strong heads*, *Free-thinkers* and such like  
 Appel-

Appellations betokening great force and liberty of mind. It is very possible, the Heroic Labours of these Men may be represented (for what is not capable of misrepresentation?) as a piratical plundering and stripping the mind of its wealth and ornaments, when it is in truth the divesting it only of its prejudices, and reducing it to its untainted original State of Nature. Oh Nature! the genuine Beauty of pure Nature! *EUPH.* You seem very much taken with the Beauty of Nature. Be pleased to tell me, *Alciphron*, what those things are which you esteem natural, or by what mark I may know them. DIAL.  
I.

XIV. *ALC.* For a thing to be natural, for instance to the mind of Man, it must appear originally therein, it must be universally in all Men, it must be invariably the same in all Nations and Ages. These limitations of original, universal and invariable exclude all those notions found in the Humane Mind, which are the effect of Custom and Education. The case is the same with respect to all other Species of Beings. A Cat, for example, hath a natural inclination to pursue a Mouse, because it agrees with the fore-mentioned marks. But if a Cat be taught  
E to



DIAL. to play tricks, you will not say those

I. tricks are natural. For the same reason  
 { if upon a Plumbtree, Peaches and Apricots  
 are engrafted, no body will say they are  
 the natural growth of the Plumbtree.

EUPH. But to return to *Man*: It seems  
 you allow those things alone to be natural  
 to him, which shew themselves upon his  
 first entrance into the World; to wit the  
 Senses and such Passions and Appetites as  
 are discovered upon the first application of  
 their respective objects. ALC. That is  
 my opinion. EUPH. Tell me, *Alci-*

*phron*, if from a young Appletree after a  
 certain period of time there shou'd shoot  
 forth Leaves, Blossoms and Apples; wou'd  
 you deny these things to be natural, be-  
 cause they did not discover and display  
 themselves in the tender bud? ALC. I  
 wou'd not. EUPH. And suppose that in  
 a Man after a certain season, the Appe-  
 tite of Lust or the Faculty of Reason shall  
 shoot forth, open and display themselves  
 as Leaves and Blossoms do in a Tree;  
 wou'd you therefore deny them to be na-  
 tural to him, because they did not appear  
 in his original infancy? ALC. I ac-  
 knowledge I wou'd not. EUPH. It seems  
 therefore, that the first mark of a thing's  
 being natural to the mind was not warily  
 laid down by you; to wit, that it shou'd  
 appear

appear originally in it. *ALC.* It seems so. *EUPH.* Again, inform me, *Alciphron*, whether you do not think it natural for an Orange-plant to produce Oranges?

*ALC.* I do. *EUPH.* But plant it in the North end of *Great Britain*, and it shall with care produce, perhaps, a good Sallad; in the Southern parts of the same Island, it may with much pains and culture thrive and produce indifferent Fruit; but in *Portugal* or *Naples* it will produce much better with little or no pains. Is this true or not? *ALC.* It is true.

*EUPH.* The Plant being the same in all places doth not produce the same Fruit, Sun, Soil, and Cultivation making a difference. *ALC.* I grant it. *EUPH.* And since the case is, you say, the same with respect to all Species; why may we not conclude by a parity of reason that things may be natural to Humane Kind, and yet neither found in all Men, nor invariably the same where they are found?

*ALC.* Hold, *Euphranor*, you must explain your self further. I shall not be over hasty in my concessions. *LYS.* You are in the right, *Alciphron*, to stand upon your guard. I do not like these ensnaring questions.

*EUPH.* I desire you to make no concessions in complaisance to me, but only to tell me your opinion upon each particular,

DIAL. that we may understand one another, know  
 I. wherein we agree, and proceed jointly in  
 finding out the Truth. But (added *Euphranor* turning to *Crito* and me) if the  
 Gentlemen are against a free and fair inquiry, I shall give them no further trouble. *ALC.* Our Opinions will stand the test. We fear no trial, proceed as you please. *EUPH.* It seems then that from what you have granted it shou'd follow, Things may be natural to Men, although they do not actually shew themselves in all Men, nor in equal perfection; there being as great difference of culture and every other advantage, with respect to Humane Nature, as is to be found with respect to the vegetable nature of Plants, to use your own similitude. Is it so or not? *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* Answer me, *Alciphron*, do not Men in all times and places when they arrive at a certain Age express their Thoughts by Speech? *ALC.* They do. *EUPH.* Shou'd it not seem then that Language is natural? *ALC.* It shou'd. *EUPH.* And yet there is a great variety of Languages. *ALC.* I acknowledge there is. *EUPH.* From all this will it not follow a thing may be natural and yet admit of variety? *ALC.* I grant it will. *EUPH.* Shou'd it not seem therefore to follow, that a thing may be natural  
 to

to Mankind, though it have not those marks or conditions assigned; though it be not original, universal and invariable?

*ALC.* It shou'd. *EUPH.* And that consequently religious Worship and civil Government may be natural to Man, notwithstanding they admit of sundry forms and different degrees of Perfection? *ALC.* It seems so. *EUPH.* You have granted already that Reason is natural to Mankind.

*ALC.* I have. *EUPH.* Whatever therefore is agreeable to Reason is agreeable to the nature of Man. *ALC.* It is.

*EUPH.* Will it not follow from hence that Truth and Vertue are natural to Man?

*ALC.* Whatever is reasonable I admit to be natural. *EUPH.* And as those Fruits

which grow from the most generous and mature stock, in the choicest soil, and with the best culture, are most esteemed; even so ought we not to think, those sublime Truths which are the Fruits of mature Thought, and have been rationally deduced by Men of the best and most improved understandings, to be the choicest productions of the rational nature of Man?

And if so, being in fact reasonable, natural and true, they ought not to be esteemed unnatural whims, errors of education and groundless prejudices, because they



DIAL. are raised and forwarded by manuring

I. and cultivating our tender minds, because they take early root and sprout forth betimes by the care and diligence of our Instructors. *ALC.* Agreed, provided still they may be rationally deduced:

But to take this for granted, of what Men vulgarly call the Truths of Morality and Religion wou'd be begging the question.

*EUPH.* You are in the right, I do not, therefore, take for granted that they are rationally deduced. I only suppose that, if they are, they must be allowed natural to Man, or in other words agreeable to, and growing from, the most excellent and peculiar part of Humane Nature.

*ALC.* I have nothing to object to this.

*EUPH.* What shall we think then of your former Assertions? That nothing is natural to Man but what may be found in all Men, in all Nations and Ages of the World: That to obtain a genuine view of Humane Nature, we must extirpate all the effects of Education and Instruction, and regard only the Senses, Appetites and Passions which are to be found originally in all Mankind: That, therefore, the notion of a God can have no foundation in nature, as not being originally in the mind, nor the same in all Men; Be pleased to reconcile these things with your late

con-

concessions, which the force of Truth seems to have extorted from you. DIAL.

I.

XV. *ALC.* Tell me, *Euphranor*, whether Truth be not one and the same uniform invariable thing, and, if so, whether the many different and inconsistent notions which Men entertain of God and Duty be not a plain proof there is no Truth in them. *EUPH.* That Truth is constant and uniform I freely own, and that consequently Opinions repugnant to each other cannot be true; but I think it will not hence follow they are all alike false. If among various Opinions about the same thing, one be grounded on clear and evident Reasons, that is to be thought true, and others only so far as they consist with it. Reason is the same, and rightly applied will lead to the same conclusions in all times and places. *Socrates* two thousand years ago seems to have reasoned himself into the same notion of a God, which is entertained by the Philosophers of our days, if you will allow that name to any who are not Atheists. And the remark of *Confucius*, That a Man shou'd guard in his youth against Lust, in manhood against Faction, and in old age against Covetousness is as current morality in *Europe* as

DIAL. in *China*. *ALC.* But still it wou'd be a  
 I. satisfaction if all Men thought the same  
 way, difference of Opinions implying un-  
 certainty. *EUPH.* Tell me, *Alciphron*,  
 what you take to be the cause of a Lunar  
 Eclipse. *ALC.* The shadow of the Earth  
 interposing between the Sun and Moon.  
*EUPH.* Are you assured of this? *ALC.*  
 Undoubtedly. *EUPH.* Are all Mankind  
 agreed in this Truth? *ALC.* By no  
 means. Ignorant and barbarous People  
 assign different ridiculous causes of this  
 appearance. *EUPH.* It seems then there  
 are different Opinions about the nature of  
 an Eclipse. *ALC.* There are. *EUPH.*  
 And nevertheless one of these Opinions  
 is true. *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* Diversity  
 therefore of Opinions about a thing doth  
 not hinder, but that thing may be, and  
 one of the Opinions concerning it may  
 be true. *ALC.* I acknowledge it. *EUPH.*  
 It shou'd seem, therefore, that your Argu-  
 ment against the Belief of a God from  
 the variety of Opinions about his nature  
 is not conclusive. Nor do I see how you  
 can conclude against the truth of any  
 moral or religious tenet, from the various  
 Opinions of Men upon the same Subject;  
 might not a Man as well argue, that no  
 historical account of a matter of fact can  
 be true, when different relations are given  
 of

of it? Or may we not as well infer, that because the several Sects of Philosophy maintain different opinions, none of them can be in the right, not even the *Minute Philosophers* themselves? During this conversation *Lyficles* seemed uneasy, like one that wished in his heart there was no God. *Alciphron*, said he, methinks you sit by very tamely, while *Euphranor* saps the foundation of our Tenets. Be of good courage, replied *Alciphron*, a skilful gamester has been known to ruin his adversary by yielding him some advantage at first. I am glad, said he turning to *Euphranor*, that you are drawn in to argue and make your appeals to Reason. For my part, wherever Reason leads I shall not be afraid to follow. Know then, *Euphranor*, that I freely give up what you now contend for. I do not value the success of a few crude notions thrown out in a loose discourse, any more than the *Turks* do the loss of that vile infantry they place in the front of their armies, for no other end but to waste the powder and blunt the swords of their enemies. Be assured I have in reserve a body of otherguess arguments, which I am ready to produce. I will undertake to prove----- *EUPH.* O *Alciphron*! I do not doubt your faculty of proving.  
But



DIAL. But before I put you to the trouble of  
 I. any farther proofs, I shou'd be glad to  
 know whether the notions of your Minute Philosophy are worth proving. I mean, whether they are of use and service to Mankind?

XV. *ALC.* As to that, give me leave to tell you, a thing may be useful to one Man's Views, and not to another's: but Truth is Truth whether useful or not, and must not be measured by the Convenience and this or that Man, or Party of Men. *EUPH.* But is not the general Good of Mankind to be regarded as a rule of measure of moral Truths, of all such Truths as direct or influence the moral Actions of Men? *ALC.* That Point is not clear to me. I know, indeed, that Legislators, and Divines, and Politicians have always alledged, That it is necessary to the wellbeing of Mankind, that they shou'd be kept in awe by the slavish Notions of Religion and Morality. But granting all this, how will it prove these Notions to be true? Convenience is one thing, and Truth is another. A genuine Philosopher, therefore, will overlook all Advantages and consider only Truth it self as such. *EUPH.* Tell me, *Alciphron*, is your genuine Philosopher

pher a wise Man, or a Fool? *ALC.* With- DIAL.  
out question, the wisest of Men. I.

*EUPH.* Which is to be thought the  
wise Man, he who acts with design, or  
he who acts at random? *ALC.* He  
who acts with design. *EUPH.* Who-  
ever acts with design, acts for some end.  
Doth he not? *ALC.* He doth. *EUPH.* And  
a wise Man for a good end? *ALC.* True.  
*EUPH.* And he sheweth his Wisdom in  
making choice of fit means to obtain his  
end. *ALC.* I acknowledge it. *EUPH.* By  
how much therefore the end proposed is  
more excellent, and by how much fitter  
the means employed are to obtain it, so  
much the wiser is the Agent to be e-  
steemed. *ALC.* This seems to be true.  
*EUPH.* Can a rational Agent propose a  
more excellent end than Happiness?  
*ALC.* He cannot. *EUPH.* Of good  
things, the greater Good is most excellent.  
*ALC.* Doubtless. *EUPH.* Is not the  
general happiness of Mankind a greater  
Good, than the private happiness of one  
Man, or of some certain Men? *ALC.* It  
is. *EUPH.* Is it not therefore the  
most excellent end? *ALC.* It seems so.  
*EUPH.* Are not then those who pursue  
this end by the properest methods to be  
thought the wisest Men? *ALC.* I grant  
they are. *EUPH.* Which is a wise  
Man


DIAL. Man govern'd by, wise or foolish  
 I. Notions? *ALC.* By wise, doubtless.

*EUPH.* It seems then to follow, that he who promotes the general wellbeing of Mankind by the proper necessary means, is truly wise, and acts upon wise grounds. *ALC.* It shou'd seem so. *EUPH.* And is not Folly of an opposite nature to Wisdom? *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* Might it not therefore be inferred, that those Men are foolish who go about to unhinge such Principles as have a necessary connexion with the general good of Mankind? *ALC.* Perhaps this might be granted: but at the same time I must observe, that it is in my power to deny it. *EUPH.* How! you will not surely deny the Conclusion, when you admit the Premises. *ALC.* I wou'd fain know upon what terms we argue: whether in this progress of Question and Answer, if a Man makes a slip it be utterly irretrievable? For if you are on the catch to lay hold of every advantage, without allowing for surprise or inattention, I must tell you this is not the way to convince my Judgment. *EUPH.* O *Alciphron*! I aim not at Triumph, but at Truth. You are therefore at full liberty to unravel all that hath been said, and to recover or correct any slip you have made. But then

then you must distinctly point it out: DIAL.  
 otherwise it will be impossible ever to I.  
 arrive at any conclusion. ALC. I agree  
 with you upon these terms jointly to  
 proceed in search of Truth, for to that  
 I am sincerely devoted. In the progress  
 of our present Inquiry I was, it seems,  
 guilty of an oversight, in acknowledging  
 the general happiness of Mankind to be  
 a greater Good than the particular hap-  
 piness of one Man. For in fact, the in-  
 dividual happiness of every Man alone,  
 constitutes his own entire Good. The  
 happiness of other Men making no part  
 of mine, is not with respect to me a  
 Good: I mean a true natural Good. It  
 cannot therefore be a reasonable end to  
 be proposed by me in Truth and Nature,  
 (for I do not speak of political pretences)  
 since no wise Man will pursue an end  
 which doth not concern him. This is  
 the voice of Nature. Oh Nature! thou  
 art the fountain, original, and pattern of  
 all that is good and wise. EUPH. You  
 wou'd like then to follow Nature, and  
 propose her as a guide and pattern for  
 your imitation. ALC. Of all things.  
 EUPH. Whence do you gather this re-  
 spect for Nature? ALC. From the ex-  
 cellency of her Productions. EUPH. In  
 a Vegetable, for instance, you say there  
 is



DIAL. is use and excellency, because the several

I.  parts of it are so connected and fitted to each other, as to protect and nourish the whole, make the individual grow, and propagate the kind, and because in its fruits or qualities it is adapted to please the Sense, or contribute to the benefit of Man. *ALC.* Even so. *EUPH.* In like manner, do you not infer the excellency of Animal Bodies from observing the frame and fitness of their several parts, by which they mutually conspire to the well-being of each other as well as of the whole? Do you not also observe a natural union and consent between Animals of the same kind, and that even different kinds of Animals have certain qualities and instincts whereby they contribute to the exercise, nourishment, and delight of each other? Even the inanimate unorganized Elements seem to have an excellence relative to each other. Where was the excellency of Water if it did not cause Herbs and Vegetables to spring from the Earth, and put forth flowers and fruits? And what wou'd become of the beauty of the Earth, if it was not warmed by the Sun, moistened by Water, and fanned by Air? Throughout the whole System of the visible and natural World, do you not perceive a mutual connexion  
and

and correspondence of parts? And is it DIAL.  
not from hence that you frame an Idea I.  
of the perfection, and order, and beauty {  
of Nature? *ALC.* All this I grant.


*EUPH.* And have not the Stoics heretofore said (who were no more Bigots than you are) and did you not your self say, this pattern of Order was worthy the imitation of rational Agents? *ALC.* I do not deny this to be true. *EUPH.* Ought we not therefore to infer the same Union, Order, and Regularity in the moral World that we perceive to be in the natural?

*ALC.* We ought. *EUPH.* Shou'd it not therefore seem to follow that reasonable Creatures were, as the philosophical Emperor † observes, made one for another; and consequently that *Man* ought not to consider himself as an independent Individual, whose happiness is not connected with that of other Men? but rather as the part of a whole, to the common good of which he ought to conspire, and order his ways and Actions suitably, if he wou'd live according to Nature. *ALC.* Supposing this to be true, what then? *EUPH.* will it not follow that a wise Man shou'd consider and pursue his private Good, with regard to, and

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† M. Antonin. l. 4.

DIAL. in conjunction with, that of other Men?

I.  in granting of which, you thought your self guilty of an oversight. Though, indeed, the sympathy of pain and pleasure, and the mutual affections by which Mankind are knit together, have been always allowed a plain proof of this point : And though it was the constant Doctrine of those, who were esteemed the wisest and most thinking Men among the Ancients, as the Platonists, Peripatetics, and Stoics; to say nothing of Christians, whom you pronounce to be an unthinking prejudiced sort of people. *ALC.* I shall not dispute this point with you. *EUPH.* Since therefore we are so far agreed, shou'd it not seem to follow from the Premises; That the belief of a God, of a future State, and of moral Duties, are the only wise, right, and genuine Principles of Humane Conduct, in case they have a necessary connection with the wellbeing of Mankind? This Conclusion you have been led to by your own concessions and by the analogy of Nature. *ALC.* I have been drawn into it step by step through several Preliminaries, which I cannot well call to mind; but one thing I observe, that you build on the necessary connexion those Principles have with the wellbeing of Mankind: which is a point neither  
proved

proved nor granted. *LYS.* This I take DIAL.  
to be a grand fundamental Prejudice, as I I.  
doubt not, if I had time I cou'd make ap-  
pear. But it is now late, and we will, if  
you think fit, defer this Subject till to-  
morrow. Upon which Motion of *Lysicles*  
we put an end to our conversation for  
that Evening.








## The SECOND DIALOGUE.

- I. *Vulgar error, that Vice is hurtful.*
- II. *The benefit of Drunkenness, Gaming, and Whoring.*
- III. *Prejudice against Vice wearing off.*
- IV. *Its usefulness illustrated in the instances of Callicles and Telefila.*
- V. *The reasoning of Lyficles in behalf of Vice examined.*
- VI. *Wrong to punish Actions when the Doctrines whence they flow are tolerated.*
- VII. *Hazardous experiment of the Minute Philosophers.*
- VIII. *Their Doctrine of Circulation and Revolution.*
- IX. *Their sense of a Reformation.*
- X. *Riches alone not the public weal.*
- XI. *Authority of Minute Philosophers: their Prejudice against Religion.*
- XII. *Effects of Luxury: Virtue whether notional?*
- XIII. *Pleasure of Sense.*
- XIV. *What sort of pleasure most natural to Man.*
- XV. *Dignity of Humane Nature.*
- XVI. *Pleasure mistaken.*
- XVII. *Amusements, Misery, and Cowardise of Minute Philosophers.*
- XVIII. *Rakes cannot reckon.*
- XIX. *Abilities and Success of Minute Philosophers.*
- XX. *Happy effects of the Minute Philosophy in particular*

*ticular instances. XXI. Their free no-* DIAL.  
*tions about Government. XXII. England* II.  
*the proper soil for Minute Philosophy.* }  
 XXIII. *The policy and address of its*  
*Professors. XXIV. Merit of Mi-*  
*nute Philosophers towards the Public.*  
 XXV. *Their Notions and Character.*  
 XXVI. *Their tendency towards Popery*  
*and Slavery.*

I.  EXT Morning, *Alciphron* and  
*Lyficles* said the Weather was  
 so fine they had a mind to  
 spend the Day abroad, and  
 take a cold Dinner under a Shade in some  
 pleasant part of the Country. Where-  
 upon, after Breakfast, we went down to  
 a Beach about half a mile off; where we  
 walked on the smooth sand, with the  
 Ocean on one hand, and on the other  
 wild broken Rocks, intermixed with sha-  
 dy Trees and springs of Water, till the  
 Sun began to be uneasy. We then with-  
 drew into a hollow Glade, between two  
 Rocks, where we had no sooner seated  
 our selves but *Lyficles* addressing himself  
 to *Euphranor*, said: I am now ready to  
 perform what I undertook last Evening,  
 which was to shew, there is nothing in  
 that necessary Connexion which some  
 Men imagine between those Principles

DIAL. you contend for, and the public Good. I  
 II. freely own, that if this Question was to  
 be decided by the authority of Legislators  
 or Philosophers, it must go against us.  
 For those Men generally take it for  
 granted, that Vice is pernicious to the  
 Public; and that Men cannot be kept  
 from Vice but by the fear of God, and  
 the sense of a future State; whence they  
 are induced to think the belief of such  
 things necessary to the wellbeing of hu-  
 mane Kind. This false notion hath pre-  
 vailed for many ages in the World, and  
 done an infinite deal of mischief, being  
 in truth the cause of religious Establish-  
 ments, and gaining the protection and  
 encouragement of Laws and Magistrates  
 to the Clergy and their Superstitions.  
 Even some of the wisest among the An-  
 cients, who agreed with our Sect in deny-  
 ing a Providence and the Immortality of  
 the Soul, had nevertheless the weakness  
 to lie under the common prejudice that  
 Vice was hurtful to Societies of Men.  
 But *England* hath of late produced great  
 Philosophers who have undeceived the  
 world, and proved to a demonstration that  
 private Vices are public Benefits. This  
 Discovery was reserved to our times, and  
 our Sect hath the glory of it. CRI. It  
 is possible some Men of fine Understand-  
 ing

ing might in former ages have had a DIAL:  
 glimpse of this important Truth; but II.  
 it may be presumed they lived in ignorant ~  
 times and bigotted countries, which were  
 not ripe for such a discovery. *LYS.* Men  
 of narrow capacities and short sight be-  
 ing able to see no further than one link  
 in a chain of Consequences, are shocked  
 at small evils which attend upon Vice.  
 But those who can enlarge their view,  
 and look through a long series of events,  
 may behold Happiness resulting from Vice,  
 and Good springing out of Evil in a thou-  
 sand instances. To prove my point I  
 shall not trouble you with Authorities or  
 far-fetched Arguments, but bring you to  
 plain Matter of Fact. Do but take a  
 view of each particular Vice, and trace  
 it through its Effects and Consequences,  
 and then you will clearly perceive the ad-  
 vantage it brings to the Public.

II. Drunkenness, for instance, is by  
 your sober Moralists thought a pernici-  
 ous Vice; but it is for want of consider-  
 ing the good effects that flow from it.  
 For in the first place it increases the  
 Malt Tax, a principal branch of his Ma-  
 jesty's Revenue, and thereby promotes the  
 safety, strength, and glory of the Na-  
 tion. Secondly, it employs a great num-



DIAL. ber of hands, the Brewer, the Malster,  
II. the Ploughman, the dealer in Hops, the  
Smith, the Carpenter, the Braſier, the  
Joiner, with all other artificers neceſſary to ſupply thoſe enumerated, with their reſpective inſtruments and utenſils. All which advantages are procured from Drunkenneſs in the vulgar way, by ſtrong Beer. This point is ſo clear it will admit of no diſpute. But while you are forced to allow thus much, I foreſee you are ready to object againſt Drunkenneſs occaſion'd by Wine and Spirits, as exporting wealth into foreign countries. But you do not reflect on the number of hands which even this ſets on work at home: The Diſtillers, the Vintners, the Merchants, the Sailors, the Shipwrights, with all thoſe who are employ'd towards victualling and fitting out Ships, which upon a nice computation will be found to include an incredible variety of Trades and Callings. Then for freighting our Ships to answer theſe foreign importations, all our manufactures throughout the Kingdom are employ'd, the Spinners, the Weavers, the Dyers, the Wool-combers, the Carriers, the Packers. And the ſame may be ſaid of many other manufactures, as well as the woollen. And if it be further conſidered, how many  
Men

Men are enriched by all the foremen-  
tioned ways of trade and business, and the  
expences of these Men, and their fami-  
lies, in all the several articles of conve-  
nient and fashionable living, whereby all  
sorts of trades and callings, not only at  
home, but throughout all parts wherever  
our commerce reaches, are kept in em-  
ployment, you will be amazed at the  
wonderfully extended scene of benefits  
which arise from the single vice of  
Drunkenness, so much run down and  
declaimed against by all grave Reformers.  
With as much judgment your half-wit-  
ted folk are accustomed to censure Ga-  
ming. And indeed (such is the ignorance  
and folly of Mankind) a Gamester and  
a Drunkard are thought no better than  
publick nuisances, when in truth, they do  
each in their way greatly conduce to the  
public benefit. If you look only on the  
surface and first appearance of things,  
you will no doubt think playing at Cards  
a very idle and fruitless occupation. But  
dive deeper, and you shall perceive this idle  
amusement employs the Card-maker, and  
he sets the Paper-mills at work, by which  
the poor Rag-man is supported; not to  
mention the Builders and Workers in wood  
and iron that are employ'd in erecting and  
furnishing those Mills. Look still deeper,

DIAL. and you shall find that Candles and

II. Chair-hire employ the industrious and the poor, who by these means come to be relieved by Sharpers and Gentlemen, who wou'd not give one penny in charity. But you will say that many Gentlemen and Ladies are ruined by play, without considering that what one Man loses another gets, and that consequently as many are made as ruined; money changeth hands, and in this circulation the life of business and commerce consists. When money is spent, it is all one to the Public who spends it. Suppose a fool of quality becomes the dupe of a Man of mean birth and circumstance, who has more wit. In this case what harm doth the Public sustain? Poverty is relieved, Ingenuity is rewarded, the Money stays at home, and has a lively circulation, the ingenious Sharper being enabled to set up an equipage and spend handsomely, which cannot be done without employing a world of people. But you will perhaps object, that a Man reduced by play may be put upon desperate courses hurtful to the Public. Suppose the worst, and that he turns Highwayman, such Men have a short life and a merry. While he lives, he spends, and for one that he robs makes twenty the better

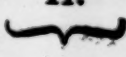
better for his expence. And when his time is come, a poor Family may be relieved by fifty or a hundred Pounds set upon his Head. A vulgar eye looks on many a Man as an idle or mischievous fellow, whom a true Philosopher viewing in another light, considers as a Man of pleasant occupation who diverts himself, and benefits the Public: And that with so much ease, that he employs a multitude of Men, and sets an infinite Machine in motion, without knowing the good he does, or even intending to do any; which is peculiar to that Gentleman-like way of doing good by Vice. I was considering Play, and that insensibly led me to the advantages, which attend robbing on the high way. Oh the beautiful and never enough admired connection of Vices! It wou'd take too much time to shew how they all hang together, and what an infinite deal of good takes its rise from every one of them. One word for a favourite Vice, and I shall leave you to make out the rest your self, by applying the same way of reasoning to all other vices. A poor Girl, who might not have the spending of half a Crown a week in what you call an honest way, no sooner hath the good fortune to be a kept Mistress, but she employs Milliners, Laun-

DIAL.  
II.



DIAL. Laundresses, Tire-women, Mercers, and  
II. a number of other trades to the benefit  
of her Country. It wou'd be endless to  
trace and pursue every particular Vice  
through its consequences and effects, and  
shew the vast advantage they all are of to  
the Public. The true Springs that actuate  
the great Machine of Commerce, and  
make a flourishing State have been hi-  
therto little understood. Your Moralists  
and Divines have for so many ages been  
corrupting the genuine Sense of mankind,  
and filling their heads with such absurd  
principles, that it is in the power of few  
Men to contemplate real life with an  
unprejudiced Eye. And fewer still have  
sufficient Parts and Sagacity to pursue a  
long train of consequences, relations and  
dependences, which must be done in or-  
der to form a just and entire notion of  
the public weal. But, as I said before,  
our Sect hath produced Men capable of  
these discoveries, who have displayed them  
in a full light, and made them public for  
the benefit of their Country.

III. Oh! Said *Euphranor*, who heard  
this discourse with great attention, you  
*Lyficles* are the very Man I wanted, elo-  
quent and ingenious, knowing in the  
principles of your Sect, and willing to  
impart

impart them. Pray tell me, do these DIAL.  
principles find an easy admission in the II.  
World? *LYS.* They do among inge- 

nious Men and People of fashion, though you will sometimes meet with strong prejudices against them in the middle sort, an effect of ordinary Talents and mean Breeding. *EUPH.* I shou'd wonder if Men were not shocked at notions of such a surprising nature, so contrary to all Laws, Education, and Religion. *LYS.* They wou'd be shocked much more if it had not been for the skilful address of our Philosophers, who, considering that most Men are influenced by names rather than things, have introduced a certain polite way of speaking, which lessens much of the abhorrence and prejudice towards Vice. *EUPH.* Explain me this. *LYS.* Thus in our Dialect a vicious Man is a Man of pleasure, a Sharper is one that plays the whole game, a Lady is said to have an affair, a Gentleman to be gallant, a Rogue in business to be one that knows the World. By this means we have no such things as Sots, Debauchees, Whores, Rogues, or the like in the *beau monde*, who may enjoy their vices without incurring disagreeable Appellations. *EUPH.* Vice then is, it seems, a fine thing with an ugly name. *LYS.* Be assured it is.  
*EUPH.*

DIAL. *EUPH.* It shou'd seem then, that *Plato's*  
 II. fearing lest youth might be corrupted,  
 by those Fables which represented the  
 Gods vicious, was an effect of his weak-  
 ness and ignorance. *LYS.* It was, take  
 my word for it. *EUPH.* And yet *Plato*  
 had kept good Company and lived in a  
 Court. And *Cicero* who knew the World  
 well had a profound esteem for him.  
*CRI.* I tell you, *Euphranor*, that *Plato*  
 and *Tully* might perhaps make a figure in  
*Athens* or *Rome*: But were they to revive  
 in our days, they wou'd pass but for un-  
 derbred Pedants, there being at most  
 Coffee-houses in *London*, several able Men  
 who cou'd convince them they knew  
 nothing in, what they are valued so  
 much much for, Morals and Politics,  
*LYS.* How many long-headed Men do I  
 know both in the Court-end and the City  
 with five times *Plato's* Sense, who care not  
 one straw what notion their Sons have  
 of God or Vertue.

IV. *CRI.* I can illustrate this Doc-  
 trine of *Lyficles* by examples that will  
 make you perceive its force. *Cleophon*, a  
 Minute Philosopher, took strict care of his  
 Son's Education and entered him betimes  
 in the principles of his Sect. *Callicles*  
 (that was his Son's name) being a Youth  
 of

of parts made a notable progress; inso-  
 much that before he became of age he  
 killed his old covetous Father with vexa-  
 tion, and ruined the Estate he left behind  
 him; or, in other words, made a present  
 of it to the Public, spreading the Dung-  
 hill collected by his Ancestors over the  
 face of the Nation, and making out of  
 one overgrown Estate several pretty for-  
 tunes for ingenious Men, who live by the  
 vices of the Great. *Telefilla*, though a  
 Woman of Quality and Spirit, made no  
 figure in the World, till she was instruct-  
 ed by her Husband in the tenets of the  
 Minute Philosophy, which he wisely  
 thought wou'd prevent her giving any  
 thing in Charity. From that time she  
 took a turn towards expensive Diversi-  
 ons, particularly deep Play, by which  
 means she soon transferred a considerable  
 share of his fortune to several acute Men  
 skilled in that Mystery, who wanted it  
 more, and circulate it quicker than her  
 Husband wou'd have done, who in re-  
 turn hath got an Heir to his Estate, hav-  
 ing never had a Child before. That same  
*Telefilla*, who was good for nothing as  
 long as she believed her Catechism, now  
 shines in all public places, is a Lady of  
 gallantry and fashion, and has by her  
 extra-



DIAL. extravagant parade in Lace and fine

II. Clothes raised a Spirit of expence in other

Ladies, very much to the public benefit, though it must be owned to the mortification of many frugal Husbands. While *Crito* related these facts with a grave face, I cou'd not forbear smiling, which *Lysicles* observing, superficial minds, said he, may perhaps find something to ridicule in these accounts; but all who are Masters of a just way of thinking must needs see that those maxims, the benefit whereof is universal, and the damage only particular to private Persons or Families, ought to be encouraged in a wise Commonwealth. For my part, said *Euphranor*, I confess my self to be rather dazzled and confounded than convinced by your reasoning; which, as you observed your self, taking in the connection of many distant points requires great extent of thought to comprehend it. I must therefore intreat you to bear with my defects, suffer me to take to pieces what is too big to be received at once; and where I cannot keep pace with you, permit me to follow you step by step, as fast as I can. *LYS.* There is reason in what you say. Every one cannot suddenly take a long concatenation of Arguments.

V. EUPH.

V. *EUPH.* Your several Arguments DIAL.  
seem to center in this, that vice circulates II.  
money and promotes industry, which cau-  
seth a People to flourish: Is it not so?  
*LYS.* It is. *EUPH.* And the reason that  
vice produceth this effect is, because it  
causeth an extravagant consumption which  
is the most beneficial to the Manufac-  
turers, their encouragement consisting in a  
quick demand and high price. *LYS.* True.  
*EUPH.* Hence you think a Drunkard  
most beneficial to the Brewer and the  
Vintner, as causing a quick consumption  
of Liquor, inasmuch as he drinks more  
than other Men. *LYS.* Without doubt.  
*EUPH.* Say, *Lyficles*, who drinks most a  
sick Man or a healthy? *LYS.* A healthy.  
*EUPH.* And which is healthiest a sober  
Man or a Drunkard? *LYS.* A Sober Man.  
*EUPH.* A Sober Man therefore in health  
may drink more than a Drunkard when  
he is sick. *LYS.* He may. *EUPH.*  
What think you, will a Man consume  
more Meat and Drink in a long life or a  
short one? *LYS.* In a long. *EUPH.* A  
Sober healthy Man, therefore, in a long  
life may circulate more Money by eating  
and drinking, than a Glutton or Drunkard  
in a short one. *LYS.* What then?  
*EUPH.* Why then it shou'd seem, that  
he may be more beneficial to the Public  
even

DIAL. even in this way of eating and drinking.

II. *LYS.* I shall never own that temperance is the way to promote drinking. *EUPH.* But you will own that sickness lessens, and death puts an end to all drinking. The same Argument will hold, for ought I can see, with respect to all other vices that impair Mens health and shorten their lives. And if we admit this, it will not be so clear a point that vice hath merit towards the public. *LYS.* But admitting that some Artificers or Traders might be as well encouraged by the sober Men as the vicious; what shall we say of those who subsist altogether by Vice and Vanity? *EUPH.* If such there are, may they not be otherwise employ'd without loss to the Public? Tell me, *Lyficles*, is there any thing in the nature of Vice, as such that renders it a public blessing, or is it only the consumption it occasions? *LYS.* I have already shewn how it benefits the nation by the consumption of its Manufactures. *EUPH.* And you have granted that a long and healthy life consumes more than a short and sickly one; and you will not deny that many consume more than one. Upon the whole then compute and say, which is most likely to promote the industry of his Countrymen, a virtuous married Man with a healthy

healthy numerous Offspring, and who feeds and cloathes the Orphans in his Neighbourhood, or a fashionable Rake about Town. I wou'd fain know whether Money spent innocently, doth not circulate as well as that spent upon Vice. And if so, whether by your own rule it doth not benefit the Public as much? *LYS.* What I have proved, I proved plainly, and there is no need of more words about it. *EUPH.* You seem to me, to have proved nothing, unless you can make it out that it is impossible to spend a fortune innocently. I shou'd think the public weal of a Nation consists in the number and good condition of its Inhabitants; have you any thing to object to this? *LYS.* I think not. *EUPH.* To this end which would most conduce, the employing Men in open air and manly exercise, or in sedentary business within doors? *LYS.* The former I suppose. *EUPH.* Shou'd it not seem therefore, that building, gardening, and agriculture would employ Men more usefully to the Public, than if Tailors, Barbers, Perfumers, Distillers and such arts were multiplied. *LYS.* All this I grant; but it makes against you. For what moves Men to build and plant but vanity, and what is vanity but vice? *EUPH.* But if a Man shou'd do those

G

things



DIAL. things for his convenience or pleasure,

II. and in proportion to his fortune, without  
 a foolish ostentation or over-rating them  
 beyond their due value, they would not  
 then be the effect of vice ; and how do you  
 know but this may be the case? *CRI.*  
 One thing I know that the readiest way  
 to quicken that sort of industry, and em-  
 ploy Carpenters, Masons, Smiths, and  
 all such trades wou'd be to put in practice  
 the happy hint of a celebrated Minute  
 Philosopher, who by profound thinking  
 has discovered, that burning the City of  
*London* wou'd be no such bad action, as  
 silly prejudiced People might possibly  
 imagine ; inasmuch as it wou'd produce a  
 quick circulation of property, transferring  
 it from the rich to the poor, and employ-  
 ing a great number of Artificers of all  
 kinds. This at least cannot be denied that  
 it hath opened a new way of thinking to  
 our Incendiaries, of which the Public  
 hath of late begun to reap the benefit.  
*EUPH.* I cannot sufficiently admire this  
 ingenious thought.

VI. But methinks it wou'd be dange-  
 rous to make it publick. *CRI.* Dangerous  
 to whom? *EUPH.* In the first place to  
 the publisher. *CRI.* That is a mistake ;  
 for the notion hath been published and  
 met

met with due applause, in this most wise and happy age of Free-thinking, Free-speaking, Free-writing, and Free-acting. DIAL:  
II.

*EUPH.* How! may a Man then publish and practise such things with impunity? *CRI.* To speak the truth, I am not so clear as to the practic part. An unlucky accident now and then befalls an ingenious Man. The Minute Philosopher *Magirus*, being desirous to benefit the Public, by circulating an Estate possessed by a near Relation who had not the heart to spend it, soon convinced himself upon these principles, that it wou'd be a very worthy action to dispatch out of the way such a useless fellow, to whom he was next heir. But for this laudable attempt, he had the misfortune to be hanged by an under-bred Judge and Jury. Could any thing be more unjust? *EUPH.* Why unjust? *CRI.* Is it not unjust to punish actions, when the principles from which they directly follow are tolerated and applauded by the Public? Can any thing be more inconsistent than to condemn in practice what is approved in speculation: Truth is one and the same, it being impossible a thing should be practically wrong and speculatively right. Thus much is certain; *Magirus* was perfect Master of all this Theory, and argued

DIAL. most acutely about it with a Friend of mine, a little before he did the fact for which he died. *LYS.* The best on't is the World every day grows wiser. *CRI.* You mistake, *Euphranor*, if you think the Minute Philosophers idle Theorists; They are Men of practical views. *EUPH.* As much as I love Liberty, I shou'd be afraid to live among such People; it would be, as *Seneca* somewhere expresseth it, *in libertate bellis ac tyrannis sæviore.* *LYS.* What do you mean by quoting *Plato* and *Seneca*? Can you imagine a Free-thinker is to be influenced by the Authority of such old fashioned Writers? *EUPH.* You, *Lyficles*, and your Friend have often quoted to me ingenious Moderns, profound fine Gentlemen, with new names of Authors in the Minute Philosophy, to whose merits I am a perfect stranger. Suffer me in my turn to cite such Authorities as I know, and have passed for many ages upon the World.

VII. But, Authority apart, what do you say to Experience? My Observation can reach as far as a private Family; and some wise Men have thought, a Family may be considered as a small Kingdom, or a Kingdom as a great Family. Do you admit

admit this to be true? *LYS.* If I say *DIAL.*  
*yes*, you'll make an inference, and if I *II.*  
*say no*, you'll demand a reason. The best  
way is to say nothing at all. There is, I  
see, no end of answering. *EUPH.* If  
you give up the point you undertook to  
prove, there is an end at once: But if you  
hope to convince me you must answer  
my questions, and allow me the liberty  
to argue and infer. *LYS.* Well, sup-  
pose I admit that a Kingdom may be con-  
sidered as a great Family. *EUPH.* I  
shall ask you then, whether ever you  
knew private Families thrive by those  
vices, you think so beneficial to the Pub-  
lick? *LYS.* Suppose I have not. *EUPH.*  
Might not a Man therefore by a parity of  
reason suspect their being of that benefit  
to the Public? *LYS.* Fear not; the next  
age will thrive and flourish. *EUPH.*  
Pray tell me, *Lyficles*; suppose you saw  
a fruit of a new untried kind; would you  
recommend it to your own Family to  
make a full meal of? *LYS.* I would not.  
*EUPH.* Why then would you try upon  
your own Country these maxims which  
were never admitted in any other? *LYS.*  
The experiment must begin somewhere;  
and we are resolved our own Country  
shall have the honour and advantage of it.  
*EUPH.* O *Lyficles*, hath not old *England*  
sublistet



DIAL. subsisted for many ages without the help

II. of your notions? *LYS.* She has. *EUPH.*

And made some figure? *LYS.* I grant it.

*EUPH.* Why then shou'd you make her run the risque of a new experiment, when it is certain she may do without it?

*LYS.* But we would make her do better. We wou'd produce a change in her that never was seen in any Nation. *EUPH.*

*Sallust* observes, that a little before the downfall of the *Roman* Empire, avarice (the effect of Luxury) had erased the good old principles of probity and justice, had produced a contempt for Religion, and made every thing venal, while ambition bred dissimulation, and caused Men to unite in clubs and parties, not from honourable motives, but narrow and interested views. The same Historian observes of that great Free-thinker *Catiline*, that he made it his business to insinuate himself into the acquaintance of young Men, whose minds unimproved by years and experience were more easily seduced.

I know not how it happens, but these passages have occurred to my Thoughts more than once during this Conversation.

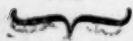
*LYS.* *Sallust* was a sententious Pedant.

*EUPH.* But consult any Historian, look into any Writer. See, for instance, what *Xenophon* and *Livy* say of *Sparta* and *Rome*,

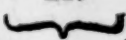
*Rome*, and then tell me if Vice be not the likeliest way to ruin and enslave a People. DIAL.  
II.

*LYS.* When a point is clear by its own evidence, I never think it worth while to consult old Authors about it. *CRI.* It requires much thought and delicate observation to go to the bottom of things. But one who hath come at Truth with difficulty can impart it with ease. I will therefore, *Euphranor*, explain to you in three words (what none of your old Writers ever dreamt of) the true cause of ruin to those States. You must know that Vice and Vertue, being opposite and contradictory Principles, both working at once in a state, will produce contrary effects, which intestine discord must needs tend to the dissolution and ruin of the whole. But it is the design of our Minute Philosophers, by making Men wicked upon principle, a thing unknown to the Ancients, so to weaken and destroy the force of vertue, that its effects shall not be felt in the Public. In which case Vice being uncontrolled without, let or impediment of principle, pure and genuine without allay of vertue, the Nation must doubtless be very flourishing and triumphant. *EUPH.* Truly, a noble Scheme! *CRI.* And in a fair way to take effect. For our young proficients in the Minute

DIAL. Philosophy, having, by a rare felicity of

II. Education, no tincture of bigotry or  
 prejudice, do far outgo the old standers  
 and professors of the Sect; who, though  
 Men of admirable parts, yet, having had  
 the misfortune to be imbued in their  
 Childhood with some religious Notions,  
 cou'd never after get intirely rid of them;  
 but still retain some small grains of con-  
 science and superstition, which are a  
 check upon the noblest Genius. In proof  
 of this, I remember that the famous Mi-  
 nute Philosopher old *Demodicus* came one  
 day, from conversation upon business with  
*Timander*, a young Gentleman of the  
 same Sect, full of astonishment. I am  
 surpris'd, said he, to see so young, and  
 withal so compleat a Villain, and, such  
 was the force of prejudice, spoke of *Ti-*  
*mander* with abhorrence, not considering  
 that he was only the more egregious  
 and profound Philosopher of the  
 two.

VIII. *EUPH.* Though much may be  
 hoped from the unprejudiced education of  
 young Gentlemen, yet it seems we are  
 not to expect a settled and intire Hap-  
 piness, before Vice reigns pure and unmix-  
 ed: till then, much is to be feared from  
 the dangerous struggle between Vice and  
 Virtue,

Virtue, which may perchance overturn DIAL.  
and dissolve this Government, as it hath II.  
done others. *LYS.* No matter for that, 

if a better comes in its place. We have cleared the land of all Prejudices towards Government or Constitution, and made them fly like other Phantasms before the light of Reason and good Sense. Men who think deeply cannot see any reason, why Power shou'd not change hands as well as Property; or why the fashion of a Government shou'd not be changed as easily as that of a Garment. The perpetual circulating and revolving of Wealth and Power, no matter through what or whose hands, is that which keeps up Life and Spirit in a State. Those who are even slightly read in our Philosophy, know that of all Prejudices the filliest is an attachment to forms. *CRI.* To say no more upon so clear a point, the overturning a Government may be justified upon the same Principles as the burning a Town, wou'd produce parallel effects, and equally contribute to the public good. In both cases, the natural springs of Action are forcibly exerted: and in this general Industry what one loses another gets, a quick circulation of Wealth and Power making the Sum Total to flourish. *EUPH.* And do the Minute Philosophers



DIAL. losophers publish these things to the  
II. World? *LYS.* It must be confessed our

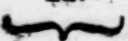
Writers proceed in Politics with greater caution than they think necessary with regard to Religion. *CRI.* But those things plainly follow from their Principles, and are to be admitted for the genuine Doctrine of the Sect, expressed perhaps with more freedom and perspicuity, than might be thought prudent by those who wou'd manage the Public, or not offend weak brethren. *EUPH.* And pray, is there not need of caution, a Rebel, or Incendiary being characters that many Men have a prejudice against? *LYS.* Weak People of all ranks have a world of absurd Prejudices. *EUPH.* But the better sort, such as Statesmen and Legislators; do you think they have not the same Indisposition towards admitting your Principles? *LYS.* Perhaps they may; but the reason is plain. *CRI.* This puts me in mind of that ingenious Philosopher, the Gamester *Glaucus*, who used to say, that Statesmen and Lawgivers may keep a stir about right and wrong, just and unjust, but that, in truth, Property of every kind had so often passed from the right owners by fraud and violence, that it was now to be considered as lying on the common, and with equal right belonged to every one

one that cou'd seize it. *EUPH.* What are we to think then of Laws and Regulations relating to Right and Wrong, Crimes and Duties? *LYS.* They serve to bind weak minds, and keep the Vulgar in awe: But no sooner doth a true Genius arise, but he breaks his way to Greatness through all the trammels of Duty, Conscience, Religion, Law; to all which he sheweth himself infinitely superior.

DIAL.  
II.

IX. *EUPH.* You are, it seems, for bringing about a thorough Reformation. *LYS.* As to what is commonly called the Reformation, I cou'd never see how or wherein the World was the better for it. It is much the same as Popery, with this difference, that it is the more prude-like and disagreeable thing of the two. A noted Writer of ours makes it too great a compliment, when he computes the benefit of Hooped-petticoats to be nearly equal to that of the Reformation. Thorough Reformation is thorough Liberty. Leave Nature at full freedom to work her own way, and all will be well. This is what we aim at, and nothing short of this can come up to our Principles. *Crito*, who is a zealous Protestant, hearing these words, cou'd not refrain.

The

DIAL. The worst effect of the Reformation,  
II.  said he, was the rescuing wicked Men from a darkness which kept them in awe. This, as it hath proved, was holding out Light to Robbers and Murderers. Light in it self is good, and the same Light which shews a Man the folly of Superstition, might shew him the truth of Religion, and the madness of Atheism. But to make use of Light, only to see the evils on one side, and never to see, but to run blindly upon the worse extreme, this is to make the best of things produce Evil, in the same sense that you prove the worst of things to produce Good, to wit, accidentally or indirectly: and by the same method of arguing, you may prove that even Diseases are useful: but whatever benefit seems to accrue to the Public, either from disease of Mind or Body, is not their genuine offspring, and may be obtained without them. *Lyficles* was a little disconcerted by the affirmative air of *Crito*; but after a short pause replied briskly, That to contemplate the public good was not every one's talent. True, said *Euphranor*, I question whether every one can frame a notion of the public good, much less judge of the means to promote it.

X. But

X. But you, *Lyficles*, who are master DIAL.  
of this subject, will be pleased to inform II.

me, whether the public good of a Nation doth not imply the particular good of its Individuals? *LYS.* It doth.

*EUPH.* And doth not the good or happiness of a Man consist, in having both Soul and Body sound and in good condition, enjoying those things which their respective Natures require, and free from those things which are odious or hurtful to them. *LYS.* I do not deny

all this to be true. *EUPH.* Now it shou'd seem worth while to consider, whether the regular decent life of a virtuous Man may not as much conduce to this end, as the mad sallies of Intemperance and Debauchery. *LYS.* I will acknowledge that a Nation may meerly subsist, or be kept alive; but it is impossible it shou'd flourish without the aid of Vice. To produce a quick circulation of traffick and wealth in a State, there must be exorbitant and irregular motions in the Appetites and Passions.

*EUPH.* The more people a Nation contains, and the happier those people are, the more that Nation may be said to flourish. I think we are agreed in this point. *LYS.* We are. *EUPH.* You allow then that Riches are not an ultimate



DIAL. mate end, but shou'd only be considered

II. as the means to procure Happiness.

*LYS.* I do. *EUPH.* It seems, that means cannot be of use without our knowing the end, and how to apply them to it. *LYS.* It seems so. *EUPH.* Will it not follow, that in order to make a Nation flourish, it is not sufficient to make it wealthy, without knowing the true end and happiness of Mankind, and how to apply wealth towards attaining that end? In proportion as these points are known and practised, I think the Nation shou'd be likely to flourish. But for a people who neither know nor practise them, to gain riches, seems to me the same advantage that it wou'd be for a sick Man to come at plenty of meat and drink, which he cou'd not use but to his hurt. *LYS.* This is meer sophistry; it is arguing without persuading. Look into common Life; examine the pursuits of Men; have a due respect for the consent of the World; and you will soon be convinced, that Riches alone are sufficient to make a Nation flourishing and happy. Give them Riches and they will make themselves happy, without that political Invention, that Trick of Statesmen and Philosophers, called Virtue.

XI. *EUPH.*

XI. *EUPH.* Virtue then, in your account, is a Trick of Statesmen. *LYS.* It is. *EUPH.* Why then do your sagacious Sect betray and divulge that Trick or Secret of State, which wise Men have judged necessary for the good Government of the World? *Lyficles* hesitating, *Crito* made answer, That he presumed it was because their Sect, being wiser than all other wise Men, disdained to see the World governed by wrong Maxims, and wou'd set all things on a right bottom. *EUPH.* Thus much is certain. If we look into all institutions of Government, and the political Writings of such as have heretofore passed for wise Men, we shall find a great regard for Virtue. *LYS.* You shall find a strong tincture of Prejudice: But, as I said before, consult the Multitude if you wou'd find Nature and Truth. *EUPH.* But among Country Gentlemen, and Farmers, and the better sort of Tradesmen, is not Virtue a reputable thing? *LYS.* You pick up Authorities among Men of low life and vile education. *EUPH.* Perhaps we ought to pay a decent respect to the Authority of Minute Philosophers. *LYS.* And I wou'd fain know whose Authority shou'd be more considered, than that of those Gentlemen who are alone above Prejudice,  
and

DIAL. and think for themselves. *EUPH.* How

II. doth it appear that you are the only un-  
 ~~~~~prejudiced part of Mankind? May not  
 a Minute Philosopher, as well as another  
 Man, be prejudiced in favour of the  
 leaders of his Sect? May not an athe-  
 istical Education prejudice towards A-  
 theism? What shou'd hinder a Man's  
 being prejudiced against Religion, as well  
 as for it? Or can you assign any rea-  
 son why an attachment to Pleasure, In-  
 terest, Vice, or Vanity, may not be sup-  
 posed to prejudice Men against Virtue?  
*LYS.* This is pleasant? What! Suppose  
 those very Men influenced by Prejudice,  
 who are always disputing against it,  
 whose constant aim it is to detect and  
 demolish Prejudices of all kinds! Ex-  
 cept their own, replied *Crito*, for you  
 must pardon me, if I cannot help thinking  
 they have some small Prejudice, though  
 not in favour of Virtue.

XII. I observe, *Lyficles*, that you al-  
 lowed to *Euphranor*, the greater number  
 of happy People are in a State, the more  
 that State may be said to flourish; it  
 follows therefore, That such methods as  
 multiply Inhabitants are good, and such  
 as diminish them are bad for the Pub-  
 lic. And one wou'd think no body need  
 be

DIAL.  
II.

be told, that the strength of a State consists more in the number and sort of People, than in any thing else. But in proportion as Vice and Luxury, those public blessings encouraged by this Minute Philosophy, prevail among us, fewer are disposed to marry, too many being diverted by Pleasure, disabled by Disease, or frightened by Expence. Nor doth Vice only thin a Nation, but also debaseth it by a puny degenerate Race. I might add, that it is ruinous to our Manufactures, both as it makes labour dear, and thereby enables our more frugal Neighbours to undersell us; and also as it diverts the lower sort of People from honest Callings to wicked Projects. If these and such considerations were taken into the account, I believe it wou'd be evident to any Man in his senses, that the imaginary benefits of Vice bear no proportion to the solid real woes that attend it. *Lyficles*, upon this, shook his head, and smiled at *Crito*, without vouchsafing any other answer. After which, addressing himself to *Euphranor*, There cannot, said he, be a stronger instance of Prejudice, than that a Man shou'd at this time of day preserve a reverence for that idol, Virtue, a thing so effectually exposed and exploded by the most knowing Men of

H

the



DIAL. the age, who have shewn, that a Man  
 II. is a meer engine, play'd upon and driven  
 about by sensible objects; and that moral  
 Virtue is only a Name, a Notion, a Chimæra, an Enthusiasm, or at best a Fashion, uncertain and changeable, like all other Fashions. *EUPH.* What do you think, *Lyficles*, of Health; doth it depend on Fancy and Caprice, or is it something real in the bodily composition of a Man? *LYS.* Health is something real, which results from the right Constitution and Temperature of the Organs and the Fluids circulating through them. *EUPH.* This you say is health of Body. *LYS.* It is. *EUPH.* And may we not suppose an healthy constitution of Soul, when the Notions are right, the Judgments true, the Will regular, the Passions and Appetites directed to their proper objects, and confined within due bounds? This, in regard to the Soul, seems what Health is to the Body. And the Man whose mind is so constituted, is he not properly called virtuous? And to produce this healthy disposition in the minds of his Countrymen, shou'd not every good Man employ his endeavours? If these things have any appearance of Truth, as to me they seem to have, it will not then be so clear a point that Virtue is a meer  
 whim

whim or fashion, as you are pleased to represent it : I must own something unexpectedly, after what had been discour-  
DIAL.  
II.

*LYS.* Wou'd you know the truth, *Euphranor*? I must own I have quite forgot all your discourse about Virtue, Duty, and all such Points, which, being of an airy notional nature, are apt to vanish, and leave no trace on a mind accustomed only to receive Impression from Realities.

XIII. Having heard these words, *Euphranor* looked at *Crito* and me, and said smiling, I have mistaken my part; it was mine to learn, and his to instruct. Then addressing himself to *Lyficles*, Deal faithfully, said he, and let me know whether the publick Benefit of Vice be in truth that which makes you plead for it? *LYS.* I love to speak frankly what I think. Know then, that Private Interest is the first and principal consideration with Philosophers of our Sect. Now of all Interests Pleasure is that which hath the strongest charms, and no Pleasures like those which are heightened and enlivened by licence. Herein consists the

DIAL. peculiar excellency of our Principles, that  
II. they shew People how to serve their  
Country by diverting themselves, causing  
the two streams of public Spirit and Self-  
love to unite and run in the same chan-  
nel. I have told you already, that I ad-  
mit a Nation might subsist by the rules  
of Virtue. But give me leave to say,  
it will barely subsist, in a dull joyless  
insipid state, whereas the sprightly ex-  
cesses of Vice inspire Men with joy: And  
where Particulars rejoice, the Public,  
which is made up of Particulars, must  
do so too; that is, the Public must be  
happy. This I take to be an irrefragable  
argument. But to give you its full  
force, and make it as plain as possible,  
I will trace things from their original.  
Happiness is the end to which created  
beings naturally tend, but we find that  
all Animals, whether Men or Brutes, do  
naturally and principally pursue real Plea-  
sure of Sense, which is therefore to be  
thought their supreme Good, their true  
End and Happiness. It is for this Men  
live, and whoever understands Life must  
allow that Man to enjoy the top and  
flower of it, who hath a quick sense of  
Pleasure, and withal Spirit, Skill, and  
Fortune sufficient to gratify every appe-  
tite and every taste. Niggards and Fools  
will

will envy or traduce such a one because they cannot equal him. Hence, all that sober trifling in disparagement of what every one wou'd be master of if he cou'd, a full freedom and unlimited scope of Pleasure. *EUPH.* Let me see whether I understand you. Pleasure of Sense, you say, is the chief Pleasure. *LYS.* I do. *EUPH.* And this wou'd be cramped and diminished by Virtue. *LYS.* It wou'd. *EUPH.* Tell me, *Lyficles*, is Pleasure then at the height when the Appetites are satisfied? *LYS.* There is then only an Indolence, the lively sense of Pleasure being past. *EUPH.* It shou'd seem therefore, that the appetites must be always craving to preserve Pleasure alive. *LYS.* That is our sense of the matter. *EUPH.* The *Greek* Philosopher therefore was in the right, who considered the body of a Man of pleasure as a leaky Vessel, always filling and never full. *LYS.* You may divert your self with Allegories, if you please. But all the while ours is literally the true taste of Nature. Look throughout the Universe, and you shall find Birds and Fishes, Beasts and Insects, all kinds of Animals, with which the Creation swarms, constantly engaged by instinct in the pursuit



DIAL. suit of sensible Pleasure. And shall Man

II. alone be the grave fool who thwarts, and  
 { crosses, and subdues his appetites, while  
 his fellow-creatures do all most joyfully  
 and freely indulge them? *EUPH.* How!

*Lyficles!* I thought that being governed  
 by the Senses, Appetites, and Passions,  
 was the most grievous Slavery; and that  
 the proper business of Free-thinkers, or  
 Philosophers, had been to set Men free  
 from the power of Ambition, Avarice,  
 and Sensuality. *LYS.* You mistake

the point. We make Men relish the  
 World, attentive to their Interests, live-  
 ly and luxurious in their Pleasures,  
 without fear or restraint either from  
 God or Man. We despise those preach-  
 ing Writers, who used to disturb or  
 cramp the pleasures and amusements of  
 Human Life. We hold, that a wise Man  
 who meddles with business, doth it alto-  
 gether for his interest, and refers his in-  
 terest to his pleasure. With us it is a  
 maxim, that a Man shou'd seize the mo-  
 ments as they fly. Without Love, and  
 Wine, and Play, and late hours, we hold  
 Life not to be worth living. I grant,  
 indeed, that there is something gross and  
 ill-bred in the vices of mean Men, which  
 the genteel Philosopher abhors. *CRI.* But  
 to cheat, whore, betray, get drunk, do all  
 these

these things decently, this is true wisdom, and elegance of taste.

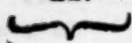
DIAL.

II.

XIV. *EUPH.* To me, who have been us'd to another way of thinking, this new Philosophy seems difficult to digest. I must therefore beg leave to examine its Principles, with the same freedom that you do those of other Sects. *LYS.* Agreed. *EUPH.* You say, if I mistake not, that a wise Man pursues only his private interest, and that this consists in sensual pleasure, for proof whereof you appeal to Nature. Is not this what you advance? *LYS.* It is. *EUPH.* You conclude therefore, that as other Animals are guided by natural instinct, Man too ought to follow the dictates of sense and appetite. *LYS.* I do. *EUPH.* But in this, do you not argue as if Man had only sense and appetite for his guides, on which supposition there might be truth in what you say? But what if he hath intellect, reason, a higher instinct and a nobler life? If this be the case, and you being Man, live like a Brute, is it not the way to be defrauded of your true happiness? to be mortified and disappointed? Consider most sorts of Brutes; you shall perhaps find them have a greater share of sensual happiness than Man. *LYS.* To

DIAL. our sorrow we do. This hath made several gentlemen of our Sect envy Brutes,

II.



and lament the lot of Humane Kind.

CRI. It was a consideration of this sort which inspired *Erotylus*, with the laudable ambition of wishing himself a snail, upon hearing of certain particularities discovered in that animal by a modern Virtuoso.

EUPH. Tell me, *Lyficles*, if you had an inexhaustible fund of gold and silver, shou'd you envy another for having a little more copper than you? LYS. I shou'd not.

EUPH. Are not Reason, Imagination, and Sense, faculties differing in kind, and in rank higher one than another.

LYS. I do not deny it. EUPH. Their acts therefore differ in kind. LYS. They do.

EUPH. Consequently the pleasures perfective of those acts are also different.

LYS. They are. EUPH. You admit

therefore three sorts of pleasure; pleasure of Reason, pleasure of imagination, and pleasure of Sense. LYS. I do.

EUPH. And, as it is reasonable to think, the operation of the highest and noblest faculty to be attended with the highest pleasure, may we not suppose the two former to be as gold or silver, and the latter only as copper? Whence it shou'd seem to follow, that Man need not envy or imitate a Brute. LYS. And ne-

vertheless

vertheless there are very ingenious Men who do. And surely every one may be allowed to know what he wants, and wherein his true happiness consists.

DIAL.  
II.

*EUPH.* Is it not plain that different Animals have different pleasures? Take a Hog from his ditch or dunghil, lay him on a rich bed, treat him with sweat-meats, and music, and perfumes. All these things will be no entertainment to him. Do not a Bird, a Beast, a Fish, amuse themselves in various manners, in-somuch that what is pleasing to one may be death to another? Is it ever seen that one of these Animals quits its own element or way of living, to adopt that of another? And shall Man quit his own Nature to imitate a Brute? *LYS.* But Sense is not only natural to Brutes; is it not also natural to Man? *EUPH.* It is, but with this difference, it maketh the Whole of a Brute, but is the lowest part or faculty of a Humane Soul. The nature of any thing is peculiarly that which doth distinguish it from other things, not what it hath in common with them. Do you allow this to be true? *LYS.* I do. *EUPH.* And is not Reason that which makes the principal difference between Man and other Animals? *LYS.* It is. *EUPH.* Reason therefore being the principal



DIAL. cipal part of our Nature, whatever is  
 II. most reasonable shou'd seem most natural  
 to Man. Must we not therefore think  
 rational Pleasures more agreeable to Hu-  
 mane Kind, than those of Sense? Man  
 and Beast having different Natures, seem  
 to have different Faculties, different En-  
 joyments, and different sorts of Happiness.  
 You can easily conceive, that the sort of  
 Life which makes the happiness of a Mole  
 or a Bat, wou'd be a very wretched one  
 for an Eagle. And may you not as well  
 conceive that the happiness of a Brute  
 can never constitute the true happiness  
 of a Man? A Beast, without Reflection  
 or Remorse, without Foresight or Appe-  
 tite of Immortality, without notion of  
 Vice or Virtue, or Order, or Reason, or  
 Knowledge! What motive, what grounds  
 can there be for bringing down Man, in  
 whom are all these things, to a level with  
 such a creature? What merit, what am-  
 bition in the Minute Philosopher to make  
 such an Animal a guide or rule for Humane  
 Life?

XV. *LYS.* It is strange, *Euphranor*,  
 that one who admits freedom of thought  
 as you do, shou'd yet be such a slave to  
 prejudice. You still talk of order and  
 vertue, as of real things, as if our Phi-  
 losophers

losophers had never demonstrated, that they have no foundation in Nature, and are only the effects of Education. I know, said *Crito*, how the Minute Philosophers are accustomed to demonstrate this point. They consider the animal nature of Man, or Man so far forth as he is animal; and it must be owned that considered in that light, he hath no sense of Duty, no notion of Virtue. He therefore, who shou'd look for Virtue among meer animals, or Humane Kind as such, wou'd look in the wrong place. But that Philosopher who is attentive only to the animal part of his Being, and raiseth his Theorys from the very dregs of our Species, might probably upon second thoughts find himself mistaken. Look you, *Crito*, said *Lyficles*, my argument is with *Euphranor* to whom addressing his discourse; I observe, said he, that you stand much upon the dignity of Humane Nature. This thing of dignity is an old worn-out notion, which depends on other notions old and stale, and worn-out, such as an immaterial Spirit, and a Ray derived from the Divinity. But in these days Men of Sense make a jest of all this Grandeur and Dignity; and many there are wou'd gladly exchange their share of it for the repose and freedom, and sensuality of a Brute. But comparisons

**DIAL.** sons are odious : waving therefore all inquiry concerning the respective excellencies of Man and Beast, and whether it is beneath a Man to follow or imitate Brute Animals, in judging of the chief good and conduct of Life and Manners, I shall be content to appeal to the Authority of Men themselves, for the truth of my notions. Do but look abroad into the World, and ask the common run of Men, whether pleasure of Sense be not the only true, solid, substantial good of their kind? *EUPH.* But might not the same vulgar sort of Men prefer a piece of Signpost Painting to one of *Raphael's*, or a *Grubstreet* Ballad to an Ode of *Horace*? Is there not a real difference between good and bad Writing? *LYS.* There is. *EUPH.* And yet you will allow there must be a maturity and improvement of understanding to discern this difference, which doth not make it therefore less real. *LYS.* I will. *EUPH.* In the same manner what shou'd hinder, but there may be in nature a true difference between Vice and Virtue, although it require some degree of reflexion and judgment to observe it? In order to know whether a thing be agreeable to the rational nature of Man, it seems one shou'd rather observe and consult those who have most employ'd or improved

proved their reason. *LYS.* Well, I shall not insist on consulting the common herd of mankind. From the ignorant and gross Vulgar, I might my self appeal in many cases to Men of rank and fashion. *EUPH.* They are a sort of Men I have not the honour to know much of by my own Observation. But I remember a remark of *Aristotle*, who was himself a Courtier and knew them well. ‘Virtue, faith he, \* and good Sense are not the property of high Birth or a great Estate. Nor if they who possess these advantages, wanting a taste for rational pleasures, betake themselves to those of Sense; ought we therefore to esteem them eligible, any more than we shou’d the toys and pastimes of Children, because they seem so to them?’ And indeed one may be allowed to question, whether the truest estimate of things was to be expected from a mind intoxicated with Luxury, and dazzled with the splendor of high living.

*Cùm stupet insanis acies fulgoribus, & cùm Acclinis falsis animus meliora recuset.* Hor.

*Crito* upon this observed, that he knew an *English* Nobleman who in the prime of

\* *Ethic. ad Nicom. l. 10. c. 6.*



**DIAL.** Life professeth a liberal art, and is the first Man of his profession in the World; **II.** and that he was very sure, he had more pleasure from the exercise of that elegant art, than from any sensual enjoyment within the power of one of the largest fortunes, and most bountiful Spirits in *Great Britain.*

**XVI. LYS.** But why need we have recourse to the judgment of other Men in so plain a case? I appeal to your own breast, consult that, and then say if sensible pleasure be not the chief good of Man. **EUPH.** I, for my part, have often thought those pleasures which are highest in the esteem of sensualists, so far from being the chiefest good, that it seemed doubtful upon the whole, whether they were any good at all, any more than the meer removal of pain. Are not our wants and appetites uneasy? **LYS.** They are. **EUPH.** Doth not sensual pleasure consist in satisfying them? **LYS.** It doth. **EUPH.** But the cravings are tedious, the satisfaction momentary. Is it not so? **LYS.** It is, but what then? **EUPH.** Why then it shou'd seem that sensual pleasure is but a short deliverance from long pain. A long avenue of uneasiness leads to a point of pleasure, which ends in disgust  
or

or remorse. *CRI.* And he who pursues this *ignis fatuus* imagines himself a Philosopher and Free-thinker. *LYS.* Pedants are governed by words and notions, while the wiser Men of pleasure follow Fact, Nature, and Sense. *CRI.* But what if notional pleasures should in fact prove the most real and lasting? Pure pleasures of Reason and Imagination neither hurt the health, nor waste the fortune, nor gall the conscience. By them the mind is long entertained without loathing or satiety. On the other hand a notion (which with you it seems passeth for nothing) often embitters the most lively sensual pleasures, which at bottom will be found also to depend upon notion more than perhaps you imagine, it being a vulgar remark, that those things are more enjoyed by hope and foretaste of the Soul than by possession. Thus much is yielded, that the actual enjoyment is very short, and the alternative of Appetite and Disgust long as well as uneasy. So that, upon the whole, it should seem those Gentlemen, who are called Men of pleasure from their eager pursuit of it, do in reality with great expence of fortune, ease, and health purchase pain. *LYS.* You may spin out plausible Arguments, but will after all find it a difficult matter to convince me, that

DIAL.  
II.

DIAL. that so many ingenious Men shou'd not be

II. able to distinguish between things so directly opposite as pain and pleasure. How is it possible to account for this? CRI. I believe a reason may be assigned for it, but to Men of pleasure no truth is so palatable as a fable. *Jove* once upon a time having ordered, that pleasure and pain shou'd be mixed in equal proportions in every dose of Humane Life, upon a complaint, that some Men endeavoured to separate what he had joined, and taking more than their share of the sweet, wou'd leave all the sour for others, commanded *Mercury* to put a stop to this evil, by fixing on each Delinquent a pair of invisible Spectacles, which shou'd change the appearance of things, making pain look like pleasure, and pleasure like pain, labour like recreation, and recreation like labour. From that time the Men of pleasure are eternally mistaking and repenting. LRS. If your Doctrine takes place I wou'd fain know what can be the advantage of a great fortune, which all mankind so eagerly pursue? CRI. It is a common saying with *Eucrates*, That a great fortune is an edged tool, which a hundred may come at, for one who knows how to use it, so much easier is the art of getting than that of spending. What

its

its advantage is. I will not say, but I will venture to declare what it is not. I am sure that where abundance excludes want, and enjoyment prevents appetite, there is not the quickest sense of those pleasures we have been speaking of, in which the Footman hath often a greater share than his Lord, who cannot enlarge his Stomach in proportion to his Estate.

DIAL.

II.

XVII. Reasonable and well-educated Men of all Ranks have, I believe, pretty much the same amusements, notwithstanding the difference of their fortunes: But those who are particularly distinguished as Men of pleasure seem to possess it in a very small degree. *EUPH.* I have heard that among Persons of that character, a game of Cards is esteemed a chief diversion. *LRS.* Without Cards there cou'd be no living for People of fashion. It is the most delightful way of passing an Evening when Gentlemen and Ladies are got together; who wou'd otherwise be at a loss what to say or do with themselves. But a pack of Cards is so engaging, that it doth not only employ them when they are met, but serves to draw them together. *Quadrille* gives them pleasure in prospect during the dull hours of the day, they reflect on it with delight,

I

and



DIAL. and it furnishes discourse when it is over.

II. *CRI.* One wou'd be apt to suspect these  
 { People of condition pass their time but  
 heavily, and are but little the better for  
 their fortunes, whose chief amusement is  
 a thing in the power of every Porter or  
 Footman, who is as well qualified to re-  
 ceive pleasure from Cards as a Peer. I  
 can easily conceive that when People of  
 a certain turn are got together, they shou'd  
 prefer doing any thing to the *ennui* of  
 their own conversation; but it is not easy  
 to conceive there is any great pleasure in  
 this. What a Card-table can afford requires  
 neither parts nor fortune to judge of.  
*LRS.* Play is a serious amusement that  
 comes to the relief of a Man of pleasure,  
 after the more lively and affecting enjoy-  
 ments of Sense. It kills time beyond any  
 thing, and is a most admirable Anodyne  
 to divert or prevent thought, which might  
 otherwise prey upon the mind. *CRI.* I  
 can easily comprehend, that no Man upon  
 Earth ought to prize Anodynes for the  
 Spleen, more than a Man of fashion and  
 pleasure. An ancient Sage speaking of  
 one of that character, saith he is made  
 wretched by disappointments and appe-  
 rites, *λυπᾶται ἀποτυγχανῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμῶν.*  
 And if this was true of the *Greeks* who  
 lived in the Sun, and had so much Spirit,

I am apt to think it is still more so of DIAL.  
 our modern *English*. Something there is II.  
 in our climate and complexion, that makes  
 idleness no where so much its own pu-  
 nishment as in *England*, where an unedu-  
 cated fine Gentleman pays for his mo-  
 mentary pleasures, with long and cruel  
 intervals of Spleen; for relief of which  
 he is driven into sensual excesses, that  
 produce a proportionable depression of  
 Spirits, which, as it createth a greater  
 want of pleasures, so it lessens the ability  
 to enjoy them. There is a cast of Thought  
 in the Complexion of an *Englishman*,  
 which renders him the most unsuccessful  
 Rake in the World. He is (as *Aristotle*  
 expresth it) at variance with himself.  
 He is neither Brute enough to enjoy his  
 appetites, nor Man enough to govern  
 them. He knows and feels that what he  
 pursues is not his true good, his reflexion  
 serving only to shew him that misery  
 which his habitual sloth and indolence  
 will not suffer him to remedy. At length  
 being grown odious to himself, and ab-  
 horring his own Company, he runs into  
 every idle Assembly, not from the hopes  
 of pleasure, but meerly to respite the  
 pain of his own mind. Listless and  
 uneasy at the present, he hath no de-  
 light in reflecting on what is past, or in  
 the

DIAL. the prospect of any thing to come. This

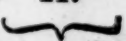
II. Man of pleasure, when after a wretched  
Scene of vanity and woe his animal nature is worn to the Stumps, wishes and dreads Death by turns, and is sick of living, without having ever tried or known the true life of Man. *EUPH.* It is well this sort of Life, which is of so little benefit to the owner, conduceth so much to that of the Public. But pray tell me, do these Gentlemen set up for Minute Philosophers? *CRI.* That Sect you must know contains two sorts of Philosophers, the wet and the dry. Those I have been describing are of the former kind. They differ rather in Practice than in Theory. As an older, graver or duller Man from one that is younger, and more capable or fond of pleasure. The dry Philosopher passeth his time but drily. He has the honour of pimping for the Vices of more sprightly Men, who in return offer some small incense to his Vanity. Upon this encouragement, and to make his own mind easy when it is past being pleased, he employs himself in justifying those excesses he cannot partake in. But to return to your question, those miserable Folk are mighty Men for the Minute Philosophy. *EUPH.* What hinders them then from putting an end to their lives?

lives? *CRI.* Their not being persuaded DIAL.  
of the Truth of what they profess. Some II.  
indeed in a fit of despair do now and then {  
lay violent hands on themselves. And as  
the Minute Philosophy prevails, we daily  
see more examples of Suicide. But they  
bear no proportion to those who wou'd  
put an end to their lives if they durst.  
My friend *Clinias*, who had been one of  
them, and a Philosopher of rank, let me  
into the secret History of their doubts and  
fears and irresolute resolutions of making  
away with themselves, which last he as-  
sures me is a frequent topic with Men of  
pleasure, when they have drunk themselves  
into a little Spirit. It was by vertue of  
this mechanical valour, the renowned  
Philosopher *Hermocrates* shot himself  
through the head. The same thing hath  
since been practised by several others to the  
great relief of their friends. Splenetic,  
worried, and frightened out of their wits,  
they run upon their doom, with the same  
courage as a Bird runs into the mouth of a  
Rattle Snake, not because they are bold to  
die, but because they are afraid to live.  
*Clinias* endeavoured to fortify his irreligi-  
on, by the discourse and opinion of o-  
ther Minute Philosophers, who were mu-  
tually strengthened in their own unbelief



DIAL. by his. After this manner, authority  
 II. working in a circle, they endeavoured to  
 ~~~~~ atheize one another. But though he  
 pretended even to a demonstration against  
 the Being of a God, yet he cou'd not in-  
 wardly conquer his own Belief. He fell  
 sick, and acknowledged this truth, is now a  
 sober Man and a good Christian; owns he  
 was never so happy as since he became  
 such, nor so wretched as while he was a  
 Minute Philosopher. And he who has  
 tried both conditions may be allowed a  
 proper judge of both. *LYS.* Truly a fine  
 account of the brightest and bravest Men  
 of the age! *CRI.* Bright and brave are  
 fine attributes. But our Curate is of o-  
 pinion, that all your Free-thinking Rakes  
 are either Fools or Cowards. Thus he  
 argues; if such a Man doth not see his  
 true Interest, he wants Sense, if he doth  
 but dare not pursue it, he wants Courage.  
 In this manner from the defect of Sense  
 and Courage, he deduceth that whole Spe-  
 cies of Men, who are so apt to value  
 themselves upon both those qualities. *LYS.*  
 As for their Courage they are at all times  
 ready to give proof of it; and for their  
 understanding, thanks to nature, it is of a  
 size not to be measured by Country  
 Parsons.

XVIII. EUPH.

XVIII. EUPH. But *Socrates*, who was DIAL.  
no Country Parson, suspected your Men II.  
of pleasure were such through ignorance. 

LYS. Ignorance of what? EUPH. Of  
the art of computing. It was his opi-  
nion that Rakes cannot reckon \*. And  
that for want of this skill they make  
wrong judgments about pleasure, on the  
right choice of which their happiness de-  
pends. LYS. I do not understand you.

EUPH. Do you grant that Sense per-  
ceiveth only sensible things? LYS. I

do. EUPH. Sense perceiveth only things  
present. LYS. This too I grant.

EUPH. Future pleasures, therefore, and  
pleasures of the understanding, are not  
to be judged of by actual Sense.

LYS. They are not. EUPH. Those  
therefore who judge of pleasure by Sense,  
may find themselves mistaken at the foot  
of the account.

† *Cùm lapidosa chiragra*

*Contudit articulos veteris ramalia fagi,*

*Tum crassos transisse dies lucemque palustrem,*

*Et sibi jam seri vitam ingemuere relictam.*

To make a right computation, shou'd  
you not consider all the faculties and all

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\* Plato in Protag.

† Persius, Sat. 5.

DIAL.

II.

the kinds of Pleasure, taking into your account the future as well as the present, and rating them all according to their true value? *CRI.* The *Epicureans* themselves allowed, that Pleasure which procures a greater Pain, or hinders a greater Pleasure, shou'd be regarded as a Pain; and, that Pain which procures a greater Pleasure, or prevents a greater Pain, is to be accounted a Pleasure. In order therefore to make a true estimate of Pleasure, the great spring of action, and that from whence the conduct of Life takes its bias, we ought to compute intellectual Pleasures and future Pleasures, as well as present and sensible: We ought to make allowance in the valuation of each particular Pleasure, for all the Pains and Evils, for all the Disgust, Remorse, and Shame that attend it: We ought to regard both kind and quantity, the sincerity, the intenseness, and the duration of Pleasures. *EUPH.* And all these points duly considered, will not *Socrates* seem to have had reason of his side, when he thought ignorance made Rakes, and particularly their being ignorant of what he calls the Science of more and less, greater and smaller, equality and comparison, that is to say of the art of Computing? *LYS.* All this discourse

course seems notional. For real abilities DIAL.  
of every kind it is well known we have II.  
the brightest Men of the age among us. ~  
But all those who know the World do  
calculate that what you call a good Chri-  
stian, who hath neither a large Con-  
science, nor unprejudiced Mind, must be  
unfit for the affairs of it. Thus you see,  
while you compute your selves out of  
pleasure, others compute you out of busi-  
ness. What then are you good for with  
all your computation? *EUPH.* I have  
all imaginable respect for the abilities of  
Free-thinkers. My only fear was, their  
parts might be too lively for such slow  
talents as Forecast and Computation, the  
gifts of ordinary Men.

XIX. *CRI.* I cannot make them the  
same compliment that *Euphranor* does.  
For though I shall not pretend to cha-  
racterize the whole Sect, yet thus much  
I may truly affirm, That those who have  
fallen in my way have been mostly raw  
Men of pleasure, old Sharpers in business,  
or a third sort of lazy Sciologists, who are  
neither Men of business, nor Men of spe-  
culation, but set up for judges or critics  
in all kinds, without having made a  
progress in any. These, among Men of  
the World pass for profound Theorists,  
and



DIAL. and among speculative Men wou'd seem  
 II. to know the World; a conceited race, equally useleſs to the affairs and ſtudies of Mankind. Such as theſe, for the moſt part, ſeem to be Sectaries of the Minute Philoſophy. I will not deny that now and then you may meet with a Man of eaſy manners, that, without thoſe faults and affectations, is carried into the party by the meer ſtream of Education, Faſhion, or Company; all which do in this age prejudice Men againſt Religion, even thoſe who mechanically rail at Prejudice. I muſt not forget that the Minute Philoſophers have alſo a ſtrong party among the Beaux and fine Ladies, and, as affectations out of character are often the ſtrongeſt, there is nothing ſo dogmatical and inconvincible as one of theſe fine things, when it ſets up for Free-thinking. But, be theſe profeſſors of the Sect never ſo dogmatical, their authority muſt needs be ſmall with Men of ſenſe; For who wou'd chooſe for his guide in the ſearch for Truth, a Man whoſe Thoughts and Time are taken up with Dreſs, Viſits, and Diversions? Or whoſe Education hath been behind a Counter, or in an Office? Or whoſe Speculations have been employed on the forms of buſineſs, who are only well read in the ways and

and commerce of Mankind, in stock-jobbing, purloining, supplanting, bribing? Or wou'd any Man in his senses give a fig for Meditations and Discoveries made over a bottle? And yet it is certain, that instead of Thought, Books, and Study, most Free-thinkers are the Profelytes of a drinking Club. Their Principles are often settled, and decisions on the deepest Points made, when they are not fit to make a bargain. *LYS.* You forget our Writers, *Crito.* They make a world of Profelytes. *CRI.* So wou'd worse Writers in such a cause. Alas! how few read! and of these, how few are able to judge? How many wish your notions true? How many had rather be diverted than instructed? How many are convinced by a title? I may allow your reasons to be effectual, without allowing them to be good. Arguments, in themselves of small weight, have great effect, when they are recommended by a mistaken interest, when they are pleaded for by passion, when they are countenanced by the humour of the age; and above all, with some sort of Men, when they are against Law, Government, and established Opinions, things which, as a wise or good Man wou'd not depart from without clear evidence, a weak or a bad Man will affect to disparage on

DIAL. on the slightest Grounds. *LYS.* And

II. yet the arguments of our Philosophers alarm. *CRI.* The force of their reasoning is not what alarms, their contempt of Laws and Government is alarming, their application to the young and ignorant is dangerous. *EUPH.* But without disputing or disparaging their talent at Ratiocination, it seems very possible their success might not be owing to that alone. May it not in some measure be ascribed to the defects of others, as well as to their own perfections? My friend *Eucrates* used to say, that the Church wou'd thrive and flourish beyond all opposition, if some certain persons minded Piety more than Politics, Practics than Polemics, Fundamentals than Confectaries, Substance than Circumstance, Things than Notions, and Notions than Words. *LYS.* Whatever may be the cause, the effects are too plain to be denied. And when a considering Man observes that our Notions do, in this most learned and knowing age, spread and multiply, in opposition to established Laws, and every day gain ground against a body so numerous, so learned, so well supported, protected, encouraged for the service and defence of Religion: I say, when a Man observes and considers all this, he will be  
apt

apt to ascribe it to the force of Truth, DIAL.  
and the merits of our cause; which, had II.  
it been supported with the revenues and ~  
establishments of the Church and Uni-  
versities, you may guess what a figure it  
wou'd make, by the figure that it makes  
without them. *EUPH.* It is much to be pi-  
tied, that the learned professors of your Sect  
do not meet with the encouragement they  
deserve. *LYS.* All in due time. People  
begin to open their eyes. It is not im-  
possible but those revenues that in igno-  
rant times were applied to a wrong use,  
may hereafter in a more enlightned age,  
be applied to a better. *CRI.* But why pro-  
fessors and encouragement for what needs  
no teaching? An acquaintance of mine  
has a most ingenious Footman that can  
neither write nor read, who learned your  
whole System in half an hour, he knows  
when and how to nod, shake his head,  
smile, and give a hint as well as the  
ablest Sceptic, and is in fact a very Mi-  
nute Philosopher. *LYS.* Pardon me, it  
takes time to unlearn religious Prejudi-  
ces, and requires a strong head. *CRI.* I  
do not know how it might have been  
once upon a time. But in the present  
laudable education, I know several who  
have been imbued with no religious no-  
tions at all; and others who have had them  
10



DIAL. so very slight, that they rubbed off without the least pains.

XX. *Panope*, young and beautiful, under the care of her Aunt, an admirer of the Minute Philosophy, was kept from learning the Principles of Religion, that she might not be accustomed to believe without a reason, nor assent to what she did not comprehend. *Panope* was not indeed prejudiced with religious notions, but got a notion of Intriguing, and a notion of Play, which ruined her reputation by fourteen, and her fortune by four and twenty. I have often reflected on the different fate of two Brothers in my neighbourhood. *Cleon* the elder being designed an accomplish'd Gentleman, was sent to town, had the first part of his education in a great School: What Religion he learned there was soon unlearned in a certain celebrated Society, which, till we have a better, may pass for a nursery of Minute Philosophers. *Cleon* dressed well, cou'd cheat at cards, had a nice palate, understood the mystery of the Die, was a mighty Man in the Minute Philosophy. And having shined a few years in these accomplishments, he died before thirty, childless, and rotten, expressing the utmost indignation that

that he cou'd not outlive that old dog his Father; who, having a great notion of polite manners, and knowledge of the World, had purchas'd them to his favourite Son, with much expence, but had been more frugal in the education of *Chærephon*, the younger Son, who was brought up at a Country-School, and entered a Commoner in the University, where he qualified himself for a Parsonage in his Father's gift, which he is now possessed of, together with the Estate of the Family, and a numerous Offspring. *LYS.* A pack of unpolish'd cubbs, I warrant. *CRI.* Less polished, perhaps, but more sound, more honest, and more useful than many who pass for fine Gentlemen. *Crates*, a worthy Justice of the Peace in this County, having had a Son miscarry at *London*, by the conversation of a Minute Philosopher, used to say with a great air of complaint, If a Man spoils my Corn, or hurts my Cattle, I have a remedy against him; but if he spoils my Children, I have none. *LYS.* I warrant you, he was for penal methods; he wou'd have had a Law to persecute tender Consciences. *CRI.* The tender Conscience of a Minute Philosopher! He who tutored the Son of *Crates*, soon after did justice

DIAL.  
II.

DIAL. justice on himself. For he taught *Lycidas*, a modest young Man, the Principles of his Sect. *Lycidas*, in return, debauched his Daughter, an only child, upon which, *Charmides*, (that was the Minute Philosopher's Name) hanged himself. Old *Bubalion* in the City is carking, and starving, and cheating, that his Son may drink and game, keep Mistresses, Hounds, and Horses, and die in a Jail. *Bubalion* nevertheless thinks himself wise, and passeth for one that minds the main chance. He is a Minute Philosopher, which learning he acquired behind the counter, from the works of *Prodicus* and *Tryphon*. This same *Bubalion* was one night at supper, talking against the Immortality of the Soul, with two or three grave Citizens, one of whom the next day declared himself bankrupt, with five thousand Pound of *Bubalion's* in his hands, and the night following he received a note from a Servant, who had during his lecture waited at table, demanding the sum of fifty guineas to be laid under a stone, and concluding with most terrible threats and imprecations.

LVS. Not to repeat what hath been already demonstrated, That the Public is at bottom no sufferer by such accidents, which in truth are inconvenient only to private

DIAL.  
II.

private persons, who in their turn too may reap the benefit of them; I say, not to repeat all that hath been demonstrated on that head, I shall only ask you whether there wou'd not be Rakes and Rogues, although we did not make them? Believe me, the World always was, and always will be the same, as long as Men are Men. CRI. I deny that the World is always the same. Humane Nature, to use *Alciphron's* comparison, is like Land, better or worse, as it is improved, and according to the Seeds or Principles sown in it. Though no body held your Tenets, I grant there might be bad Men by the force of corrupt appetites and irregular passions: But where Men, to the force of appetite and passion, add that of opinion, and are wicked from Principle, there will be more Men wicked, and those more incurably and outrageously so. The error of a lively Rake lies in his passions, and may be reformed: But the dry Rogue who sets up for judgment, is incorrigible. It is an observation of *Aristotle's*, That there are two sorts of Debauchees, the ἀκρατής, and the ἀκόλας, of which the one is so against his judgment, the other with it, and that there may be hopes of the former, but none of the latter. And in

K

fact



DIAL. fact I have always observed, that a Rake

II. who is a Minute Philosopher, when  
 { grown old becomes a sharper in business.

LYS. I cou'd name you several such who have grown most noted Patriots. CRI.

Patriots! such Patriots as *Catiline* and *Marc Antony*. LYS. And what then?

Those famous *Romans* were brave though unsuccessful. They wanted neither Sense nor Courage, and if their Schemes had taken effect, the brisker part of their Countrymen had been much the better for them.

XXI. The wheels of Government go on, though wound up by different hands; if not in the same form, yet in some other, perhaps a better. There is an endless variety in nature, weak Men, indeed, are prejudiced towards Rules and Systemes in Life and Government; and think if these are gone all is gone: But a Man of a great Soul and free Spirit delights in the noble experiment of blowing up Systemes and dissolving Governments, to mold them anew upon other principles and in another shape. Take my word for it; there is a plastic nature in things that seeks its own end. Pull a State to pieces, jumble, confound, and shake together the particles of Humane Society, and then let them

them stand a while, and you shall soon see them settle of themselves in some convenient order, where heavy heads are lowest and Men of genius uppermost. *EUPH.*

*Lyficles* speaks his mind freely. *LRS.*

Where was the advantage of Free-thinking if it were not attended with Free-speaking, or of Free-speaking if it did not produce Free-acting? We are for absolute, independent, original freedom in thought, word, and deed. Inward freedom without outward, is good for nothing but to set a Man's judgment at variance with his practice. *CRI.* This free way of *Lyficles* may seem new to you; it is not so to me. As the Minute Philosophers lay it down for a maxim, that there is nothing sacred of any kind, nothing but what may be made a jest of, exploded, and changed like the fashion of their Clothes, so nothing is more frequent than for them to utter their schemes and principles, not only in select Companies, but even in public. In a certain part of the World, where ingenious Men are wont to retail their Speculations, I remember to have seen a *Valetudinarian* in a long Wig and a Cloak sitting at the upper end of a Table, with half a dozen of Disciples about him. After he had talked about Religion in a manner, and with an air that wou'd make

DIAL. one think, Atheism established by Law  
II. and Religion only tolerated, he entered  
upon Civil Government, and observed to  
his Audience, that the natural World was  
in a perpetual circulation: Animals, said  
he, who draw their sustenance from the  
Earth, mix with that same Earth, and in  
their turn become Food for Vegetables,  
which again nourish the Animal kind:  
The Vapours that ascend from this Globe  
descend back upon it in showers: The  
Elements alternately prey upon each other:  
That which one part of nature loseth a-  
nother gains, the sum total remaining  
always the same, being neither bigger  
nor lesser, better nor worse for all these  
intestine changes. Even so, said this  
learned Professor, the revolutions in the  
civil World are no detriment to Humane  
Kind; one part whereof rises as the other  
falls, and wins by another's loss. A Man  
therefore who thinks deeply, and hath an  
eye on the whole Systeme, is no more a  
Bigot to Government than to Religion.  
He knows how to suit himself to occasi-  
ons, and make the best of every event: For  
the rest, he looks on all translations of  
power and property from one hand to  
another with a philosophic indifference.  
Our Lecturer concluded his discourse with  
a most ingenious Analysis of all political  
and

and moral Virtues into their first principles and causes, shewing them to be meer fashions, tricks of State, and illusions on the Vulgar. *LYS.* We have been often told of the good effects of Religion and Learning, Churches and Universities: But I dare affirm, that a dozen or two ingenious Men of our Sect have done more towards advancing real knowledge, by extemporaneous Lectures in the compass of a few years, than all the Ecclesiastics put together for as many Centuries. *EUPH.* And the Nation no doubt thrives accordingly; But, it seems, *Crito*, you have heard them discourse. *CRI.* Upon hearing this and other Lectures of the same tendency, methought it was needless to establish Professors for the Minute Philosophy in either University, while there are so many spontaneous Lecturers in every corner of the Streets, ready to open Mens Eyes, and rub off their prejudices about Religion, Loyalty, and public Spirit. *LYS.* If wishing was to any purpose, I cou'd wish for a Telescope that might draw into my view things future in time, as well as distant in place. Oh! that I cou'd but look into the next age, and behold what it is that we are preparing to be, the glorious harvest of our Principles, the spreading of which hath produced a visible



DIAL. ble tendency, in the Nation towards something great and new. CRI. One thing I dare say you wou'd expect to see, be the changes and agitations of the Public what they will, that is, every Free-thinker upon his legs. You are all Sons of Nature, who chearfully follow the fortunes of the common Mass. LYS. And it must be owned we have a maxim, that *each shou'd take care of one*. CRI. Alas, *Lyficles*, you wrong your own Character. You wou'd fain pass upon the World and upon your selves for interested cunning Men: But can any thing be more disinterested than to sacrifice all regards to the abstracted Speculation of Truth? Or can any thing be more void of all cunning than to publish your discoveries to the World, teach others to play the whole game, and arm Mankind against your selves?

XXII. If a Man may venture to suggest so mean a thought as the love of their Country, to Souls fired with the love of Truth, and the love of Liberty, and grasping the whole extent of Nature, I wou'd humbly propose it to you, Gentlemen, to observe the caution practised by all other discoverers, projectors, and makers of experiments, who never hazard all on the first trial. Wou'd it not be prudent to try  
the

DIAL.

II.

the success of your principles on a small model in some remote corner? For instance set up a Colony of Atheists in *Monomotapa*, and see how it prospers before you proceed any further at home: Half a dozen Shipload of Minute Philosophers might easily be spared upon so good a design. In the mean time, you Gentlemen, who have found out that there is nothing to be hoped or feared in another Life, that Conscience is a Bugbear, that the bands of Government, and the cement of Humane Society are rotten things, to be dissolved and crumbled into nothing, by the argumentation of every Minute Philosopher, be so good as to keep these sublime discoveries to your selves: Suffer us, our Wives, our Children, our Servants and our Neighbours to continue in the Belief and way of Thinking established by the Laws of our Country. In good earnest, I wish you wou'd go try your experiments among the *Hottentots* or *Turks*. *L Y S.* The *Hottentots* we think well of, believing them to be an unprejudiced People; but it is to be feared their diet and customs wou'd not agree with our Philosophers: As for the *Turks* they are Bigots who have a notion of God and a respect for Jesus Christ. I question whether it might be safe to venture among

DIAL. them. CRI. Make your experiment  
II. then in some other part of *Christendom*.

~ LRS. We hold all other Christian Nations to be much under the power of prejudice; even our Neighbours the *Dutch* are too much prejudiced in favour of their Religion by Law established, for a prudent Man to attempt innovations under their Government. Upon the whole it seems, we can execute our Schemes no where with so much security and such prospect of success as at home. Not to say that we have already made a good progress. Oh! That we cou'd but once see a Parliament of true, staunch, libertine Free-thinkers! CRI. God forbid. I shou'd be sorry to have such Men for my Servants, not to say, for my Masters. LRS. In that we differ.

XXIII. But you will agree with me that the right way to come at this, was to begin with extirpating the prejudices of particular Persons. We have carried on this work for many years with much art and industry, and at first with secrecy, working like Moles under ground, concealing our progress from the Public, and our ultimate views from many, even of our own Profelytes, blowing the Coals between polemical Divines, laying hold  
on

on and improving every incident, which the passions and folly of Churchmen afforded, to the advantage of our Sect. As our principles obtained, we still proceeded to farther inferences; and as our numbers multiplied, we gradually disclosed ourselves and our Opinions; where we are now I need not say. We have stubbed and weeded and cleared Humane Nature to that degree, that in a little time, leaving it alone without any labouring or teaching, you shall see natural and just Ideas sprout forth of themselves. *CRI.* But I have heard a man, who had lived long and observed much, remark that the worst and most unwholesom weed was this same Minute Philosophy. We have had, said he, divers epidemical distempers in the State, but this hath produced of all others the most destructive Plague. Enthusiasm had its day, its effects were violent and soon over: This infects more quietly but spreads widely: The former bred a fever in the State, this breeds a consumption and final decay. A Rebellion or an Invasion alarms and puts the Public upon its defence, but a corruption of principles works its ruin more slowly perhaps, but more surely. This may be illustrated by a Fable I somewhere met with in the writings of a *Swiss* Philosopher, setting forth



DIAL.

II.

forth the original of Brandy and Gunpowder. The Government of the North being once upon a time vacant, the Prince of the power of the air convened a Council in Hell, wherein upon competition between two Dæmons of rank, it was determined they shou'd both make trial of their abilities, and he shou'd succeed who did most mischief. One made his appearance in the shape of Gunpowder, the other in that of Brandy: The former was a declared Enemy and roared with a terrible noise, which made folks afraid, and put them on their guard: The other passed as a Friend and a Physician through the World, disguised himself with Sweets and Perfumes and Drugs, made his way into the Ladys Cabinets, and the Apothecaries Shops, and under the notion of helping digestion, comforting the Spirits, and cheering the Heart, produced direct contrary effects; and having insensibly thrown great numbers of Humane Kind into a lingring but fatal decay, was found to people Hell and the Grave so fast as to merit the Government which he still possesses.

XXIV. *LRS.* Those who please may amuse themselves with Fables and Allegories. This is plain *English*: Liberty is a good

good thing, and we are the support of DIAL.  
Liberty. *CRI.* To me it seems that II.  
Liberty and Virtue were made for each {  
other. If any Man wish to enslave his  
Country, nothing is a fitter preparative  
than Vice; and nothing leads to Vice so  
surely as Irreligion. For my part I cannot  
comprehend or find out, after having  
considered it in all lights, how this cry-  
ing down Religion shou'd be the effect of  
honest views towards a just and legal Li-  
berty. Some seem to propose an indul-  
gence in Vice. Others may have in pros-  
pect the advantages which needy and am-  
bitious Men are used to make in the ruin  
of a State: One may indulge a pert petu-  
lant Spirit; another hope to be esteemed  
among Libertines, when he wants wit to  
please or abilities to be useful. But, be  
Mens views what they will, let us examine  
what good your principles have done;  
who has been the better for the instruc-  
tions of these Minute Philosophers? Let  
us compare what we are in respect of  
Learning, Loyalty, Honesty, Wealth,  
Power and Public Spirit with what we  
have been. Free-thinking (as it is called)  
hath wonderfully grown of late years. Let  
us see what hath grown up with it, or  
what effects it hath produced. To make a  
catalogue of ills is disagreeable; and the  
only


DIAL, only blessing it can pretend to is Luxury:

II. That same blessing which revenged the  
 World upon old *Rome*: That same Luxury  
 that makes a Nation, like a diseased  
 pampered body, look full and fat with  
 one foot in the Grave. *LYS.* You mis-  
 take the matter. There are no People  
 who think and argue better about the  
 public good of a State than our Sect;  
 who have also invented many things tend-  
 ing to that end, which we cannot as yet  
 conveniently put in practice. *CRI.* But  
 one point there is from which it must be  
 owned the Public hath already received  
 some advantage, which is the effect of  
 your principles flowing from them, and  
 spreading as they do; I mean that old  
*Roman* practice of Self-murder, which  
 at once puts an end to all distress, ridding  
 the World and themselves of the misera-  
 ble. *LYS.* You were pleased before to  
 make some reflexions on this Custom, and  
 laugh at the irresolution of our Free-  
 thinkers; But I can aver for matter of  
 fact, that they have often recommended  
 it by their example as well as arguments,  
 and that it is solely owing to them that a  
 practice, so useful and magnanimous,  
 hath been taken out of the hands of Lu-  
 natics, and restored to that credit among  
 Men of sense, which it anciently had. In  
 what?

whatever light you may consider it, this is in fact a solid Benefit: But the best effect of our principles is that light and truth so visibly shed abroad in the World. From how many prejudices, errors, perplexities and contradictions have we freed the minds of our Fellow-Subjects? How many hard words and intricate absurd notions had possessed the minds of Men before our Philosophers appeared in the World? But now even Women and Children have right and sound notions of things. What say you to this, *Crito*? *CRI.* I say, with respect to these great advantages of destroying Men and Notions, that I question whether the Public gains as much by the latter as it loseth by the former. For my own part I had rather my Wife and Children all believed what they had no notion of, and daily pronounced words without a meaning, than that any one of them shou'd cut his Throat, or leap out of a Window. Errors and nonsense as such are of small concern in the eye of the Public, which consider not the metaphysical truth of notions, so much as the tendency they have to produce good or evil. Truth it self is valued by the Public, as it hath an influence, and is felt in the course of Life. You may confute a whole shelf of School-men, and discover many

DIAL.  
II.



**DIAL.** many speculative Truths, without any great merit towards your Country. But if  
**II.**  I am not mistaken, the Minute Philosophers are not the Men to whom we are most beholden for discoveries of that kind: This I say must be allowed supposing, what I by no means grant, your notions to be true. For, to say plainly what I think, the tendency of your opinions is so bad, that no good Man can endure them, and your arguments for them so weak that no wise Man will admit them. *LYS.* Has it not been proved as clear as the Meridian Sun, that the politer sort of Men lead much happier lives, and swim in pleasure since the spreading of our Principles? But, not to repeat or insist further on what has been so amply deduced, I shall only add that the advantages flowing from them, extend to the tenderest Age and the softer Sex: Our principles deliver Children from terrors by night, and Ladies from splenetic hours by day. Instead of these old fashioned things, Prayers and the Bible, the grateful amusements of Drams, Dice, and Billets-doux have succeeded. The fair Sex have now nothing to do but dress and paint, drink and game, adorn and divert themselves, and enter into all the sweet Society of Life. *CRI.* I thought, *Lyficles*, the argument from plea-

pleasure had been exhausted; but since you have not done with that point, let us once more by *Euphranor's* rule cast up the account of pleasure and pain, as credit and debt under distinct Articles. We will set down in the life of your fine Lady, rich clothes, dice, cordials, scandal, late hours against vapours, distaste, remorse, losses at play, and the terrible distress of ill spent age increasing every day; suppose no cruel accident of jealousy, no madness or infamy of love, yet at the foot of the account you shall find that empty, giddy, gaudy, fluttering thing, not half so happy as a butterfly, or a grasshopper on a Summer's day: And for a Rake or Man of pleasure, the reckoning will be much the same, if you place listlessness, ignorance, rottenness, loathing, craving, quarrelling, and such qualities or accomplishments over against his little circle of fleeting amusements, long woe against momentary pleasure; and if it be considered that, when Sense and Appetite go off, though he seek refuge from his Conscience in the Minute Philosophy, yet in this you will find, if you sift him to the bottom, that he affects much, believes little, knows nothing. Upon which *Lyficles* turning to me observed, that *Crito* might dispute against fact if he pleased, but that every one

DIAL. one must see the Nation was the merrier  
 II. for their principles. True, answered  
 { *Crito*, we are a merry Nation indeed:  
 Young Men laugh at the old; Children  
 despise their Parents; and Subjects make  
 a jest of the Government; happy effects of  
 the Minute Philosophy!

XXV. *LRS.* Infer what effects you  
 please that will not make our principles  
 less true. *CRI.* Their truth is not what  
 I am now considering. The point at pre-  
 sent is the usefulness of your principles;  
 and to decide this point we need only  
 take a short view of them fairly proposed  
 and laid together: That there is no God  
 or Providence; that Man is as the Beasts  
 that perish; that his Happiness as theirs  
 consists in obeying animal instincts, appe-  
 tites and passions; that all stings of con-  
 science and sense of guilt are prejudices  
 and errors of Education; that Religion is a  
 State trick; that Vice is beneficial to the  
 Public; that the Soul of Man is corporeal  
 and dissolveth like a flame or vapour;  
 that Man is a Machine actuated accord-  
 ing to the Laws of motion; that conse-  
 quently he is no agent or subject of guilt;  
 that a wise Man will make his own par-  
 ticular individual interest in this present  
 life, the rule and measure of all his  
 actions:

actions: These and such Opinions are, it seems, the Tenets of a Minute Philosopher, who is himself according to his own principles an Organ play'd on by sensible objects, a Ball bandied about by appetites, and passions; so subtle is he as to be able to maintain all this by artful reasonings; so sharp-sighted and penetrating to the very bottom of things as to find out, that the most interested occult cunning is the only true wisdom. To compleat his Character, this curious piece of Clockwork, having no principle of Action within it self, and denying that it hath or can have any one Free Thought or Motion, sets up for the Patron of Liberty, and earnestly contends for *Free-thinking*. *Crito* had no sooner made an end, but *Lyficles* address'd himself to *Euphranor* and me; *Crito*, said he, has taken a world of pains, but convinced me only of one single point, to wit, That I must despair of Convincing him. Never did I in the whole course of my life meet with a Man so deeply immersed in Prejudice; let who will pull him out for me. But I entertain better hopes of you. I can answer, said I, for my self, that my eyes and ears are always open to Conviction: I am attentive to all that passes, and upon the whole shall form, whether right or wrong, a  
L very



DIAL. very impartial judgment. *Crito*, said

II. *Euphranor*, is a more enterprising Man than I, thus to rate and lecture a Philosopher. For my part, I always find it easier to learn than to teach. I shall therefore beg your assistance to rid me of some scruples about the tendency of your Opinions; which I find my self unable to master, though never so willing. This done, though we shou'd not tread exactly in the same steps, nor perhaps go the same road; yet we shall not run in all points diametrically opposite one to another.

XXVI. Tell me now, *Lyficles*, you who are a minute observer of things, whether a shade be more agreeable at morning or evening or noon-day. *LYS.* Doubtless at noon-day. *EUPH.* And what disposeth Men to rest? *LYS.* Exercise. *EUPH.* When do Men make the greatest fires? *LYS.* In the coldest weather. *EUPH.* And what creates a love for iced liquors? *LYS.* Excessive heat. *EUPH.* What if you raise a Pendulum to a great height on one side? *LYS.* It will, when left to it self, ascend so much the higher on the other. *EUPH.* It shou'd seem, therefore, that Darkness ensues from Light, Rest from Motion, Heat from Cold, and in general that one Extreme

treme is the consequence of another. *DEAL.*  
*LYS.* It shou'd seem so. *EUPH.* And II.  
 doth not this observation hold in the  
 civil as well as natural World? Doth  
 not Power produce Licence, and Licence  
 Power? Do not Whigs make Tories, and  
 Tories Whigs? Bigots make Atheists, and  
 Atheists Bigots? *LYS.* Granting this to  
 be true. *EUPH.* Will it not hence fol-  
 low, that as we abhor Slavish Principles,  
 we shou'd avoid running into Licentious  
 ones? I am and always was a sincere  
 lover of Liberty, Legal *English* Liberty;  
 which I esteem a chief blessing, orna-  
 ment, and comfort of Life, and the great  
 Prerogative of an *Englishman*. But is it  
 not to be feared, that upon the Nation's  
 running into a Licentiousness which hath  
 never been endured in any civilized Coun-  
 try, Men feeling the intolerable evils of  
 one extreme may naturally fall into the  
 other? You must allow, the bulk of Man-  
 kind are not Philosophers like you and  
*Alciphron*. *LYS.* This I readily acknow-  
 ledge. *EUPH.* I have another scruple  
 about the tendency of your Opinions.  
 Suppose you shou'd prevail and destroy  
 this Protestant Church and Clergy: How  
 cou'd you come at the Popish? I am cre-  
 dibly informed there is a great number  
 of Emissaries of the Church of *Rome*

DIAL. disguised in *England*: who can tell what

II. harvest a Clergy so numerous, so subtle, and so well furnished with arguments to work on vulgar and uneducated minds, may be able to make in a Country despoiled of all Religion, and feeling the want of it? Who can tell whether the Spirit of Free-thinking ending with the Opposition, and the Vanity with the Distinction, when the whole Nation are alike Infidels, who can tell, I say, whether in such a juncture the Men of Genius themselves may not affect a new Distinction, and be the first converts to Popery?

*LYS.* And suppose they shou'd. Between friends it wou'd be no great matter. These are our maxims. In the first place we hold it wou'd be best to have no Religion at all. Secondly, we hold that all Religions are indifferent. If therefore upon trial we find the Country cannot do without a Religion, why not Popery as well as another? I know several ingenious Men of our Sect, who, if we had a Popish Prince on the Throne, wou'd turn Papists to-morrow. This is a Paradox, but I shall explain it. A Prince whom we compliment with our Religion, to be sure must be grateful.

*EUPH.* I understand you. But what becomes of Free-thinking all the while?

*LYS.* Oh! we shou'd have more than  
ever

ever of that, for we shou'd keep it all to our selves. As for the amusement of re-  
 tailing it, the want of this wou'd be  
 largely compensated by solid advantages  
 of another kind. *EUPH.* It seems then,  
 by this account, the Tendency you ob-  
 served in the Nation towards something  
 great and New proves a Tendency to-  
 wards Popery and Slavery. *LYS.* Mis-  
 take us not, good *Euphranor*. The thing first  
 in our intention is Consummate Liberty:  
 But if this will not do, and there must  
 after all be such things tolerated as Re-  
 ligion and Government, we are wisely  
 willing to make the best of both.

DIAL.  
 II.

*CRI.* This puts me in mind of a thought  
 I have often had, That Minute Philoso-  
 phers are Dupes of the Jesuits. The  
 two most avowed, professed, busy, pro-  
 pagators of Infidelity in all companies,  
 and upon all occasions, that I ever met  
 with, were both Bigotted Papists, and  
 being both Men of considerable estates,  
 suffered considerably on that score; which,  
 it is wonderful their Thinking Disci-  
 ples shou'd never reflect upon. *Hege-*  
*mon*, a most distinguished Writer among  
 the Minute Philosophers, and Hero of  
 the Sect, I am well assured, was once a  
 Papist, and never heard that he profes-  
 sed any other Religion. I know that



DIAL. many of the Church of *Rome* abroad,  
 II. are pleased with the growth of Infidelity among us, as hoping it may make way for them. The Emissaries of *Rome* are known to have personated several other Sects, which from time to time have sprung up amongst us, and why not this of the Minute Philosophers, of all others the best calculated to ruin both Church and State? I my self have known a Jesuit abroad talk among *English* Gentlemen like a Free-thinker. I am credibly informed, that Jesuits, known to be such by the Minute Philosophers at home, are admitted into their Clubs: And I have observed them to approve, and speak better of the Jesuits, than of any other Clergy whatsoever. Those who are not acquainted with the subtle Spirit, the refined Politics, and wonderful Oeconomy of that renowned Society, need only read the account given of them by the Jesuit *Inchofer*, in his Book *De Monarchia Solipsorum*; and those who are, will not be surprized they shou'd be able to make Dupes of our Minute Philosophers: Dupes, I say, for I can never think they suspect they are only tools to serve the ends of cunning Men than themselves. They seem to me drunk and giddy with a false notion

tion of Liberty, and spur'd on by this principle to make mad Experiments on their Country, they agree only in pulling down all that stands in their way; without any concerted Scheme, and without caring or knowing what to erect in its stead. To hear them, as I have often done, descant on the moral Virtues, resolve them into Shame, then laugh at Shame as a weakness, admire the unconfin'd lives of Savages, despise all order and decency of Education, one wou'd think the intention of these Philosophers was, when they had pruned and weeded the notions of their fellow-subjects, and divested them of their Prejudices, to strip them of their Clothes, and fill the country with naked Followers of Nature, enjoying all the Privileges of Brutality. Here *Crito* made a pause, and fixed his eyes on *Alciphron*, who during this whole conversation had sat thoughtful and attentive, without saying a word, and with an air, one while dissatisfied at what *Lyficles* advanced, another, serene and pleased, seeming to approve some better thought of his own. . But the day being now far spent, *Alciphron* propos'd to adjourn the Argument till the following; when, said he, I shall set matters on a new Foundation, and in so full and clear

DIAL, a Light, as, I doubt not, will give in-  
II. tire Satisfaction. So we changed the  
discourse, and after a repast upon cold  
Provisions, took a walk on the Strand,  
and in the cool of the evening returned  
to Crito's.





The THIRD DIALOGUE.

- I. Alciphron's account of Honour. II. Character and conduct of Men of Honour. III. Sense of moral Beauty. IV. The *Honestum* or τὸ καλὸν of the ancients. V. Taste for moral Beauty whether a sure guide or rule. VI. Minute Philosophers ravished with the abstract Beauty of Virtue. VII. Their Virtue alone disinterested and heroic. VIII. Beauty of sensible objects what and how perceived? IX. The idea of Beauty explained by Painting and Architecture. X. Beauty of the moral System wherein it consists. XI. It supposeth a Providence. XII. Influence of τὸ καλὸν and τὸ πρέπον. XIII. Enthusiasm of Cratylus compared with the sentiments of Aristotle. XIV. Compared with the Stoical principles. XV. Minute Philosophers, their talent for Raillery and Ridicule. XVI. The wisdom of those who make virtue alone its own reward.

THE



DIAL.

III.

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I.



THE following day as we fate round the Tea-table, in a Summer-Parlour which looks into the Garden, *Alciphron* after the first dish turned down his cup, and reclining back in his Chair proceeded as follows. Above all the Sects upon earth it is the peculiar Privilege of ours, not to be tied down by any Principles. While other Philosophers profess a servile adherence to certain Tenets, ours assert a noble freedom, differing not only one from another, but very often the same Man from himself. Which method of proceeding, beside other advantages, hath this annexed to it, that we are of all Men the hardest to confute. You may, perhaps, confute a particular Tenet, but then this affects only him who maintains it, and so long only as he maintains it. Some of our Sect dogmatize more than others, and in some more than other points. The Doctrine of the usefulness of Vice is a point wherein we are not all agreed. Some of us are great admirers of Virtue. With others the points of Vice and Virtue are problematical. For my own part, though I think the Doctrine maintained yesterday by *Lyficles* an ingenious speculation; yet, upon the whole, there are divers Reasons which  
incline

incline me to depart from it, and rather to espouse the Virtuous side of the question; with the smallest, perhaps, but the most Contemplative and Laudable part of our Sect. It seemeth, I say, after a nice inquiry and balancing on both sides, that we ought to prefer Virtue to Vice; and that such preference wou'd contribute both to the public Weal, and the reputation of our Philosophers. You are to know then, we have among us several that, without one grain of Religion, are Men of the nicest Honour, and therefore Men of Virtue because Men of Honour. Honour is a noble unpolluted Source of Virtue, without the least mixture of Fear, Interest or Superstition. It hath all the advantages without the evils which attend Religion. It is the mark of a great and fine soul, and is to be found among Persons of Rank and Breeding. It affects the Court, the Senate, and the Camp, and in general every Rendezvous of people of fashion. *EUPH.* You say then that honour is the Source of Virtue. *ALC.* I do. *EUPH.* Can a thing be the source of it self? *ALC.* It cannot. *EUPH.* The Source, therefore, is distinguished from that of which it is the Source. *ALC.* Doubtless. *EUPH.* Honour then is one thing and Virtue another. *ALC.* I grant it. Virtu-

tuous

**DIAL.** ous actions are the effect, and Honour is the Source or Cause of that effect. *EUPH.*

**III.** Tell me. Is Honour the Will producing those actions, or the final Cause for which they are produced, or right Reason which is their rule and limit, or the Object about which they are conversant? Or do you by the word *Honour* understand a Faculty or Appetite? All which are supposed, in one sense or other, to be the Source of humane actions. *ALC.* Nothing of all this. *EUPH.* Be pleased then to give me some notion or definition of it. *Alciphron* having mused a while answered, that he defined Honour to be a Principle of virtuous Actions. To which *Euphranor* replied; if I understand it rightly the word Principle is variously taken. Sometimes by Principles we mean the parts of which a whole is composed, and into which it may be resolved. Thus the Elements are said to be principles of compound bodies. And thus words, syllables, and letters are the principles of Speech. Sometimes by Principle we mean a small particular seed, the growth or gradual unfolding of which doth produce an Organized Body, animal or vegetable, in its proper size and shape. Principles at other times are supposed to be certain fundamental Theorems in Arts and Sciences, in Religion and Politics.

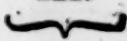
Let

Let me know in which of these senses, **DIAL.**  
or whether it be in some other sense **III.**  
that you understand this word, when  
you say, Honour is a Principle of Virtue.  
To this *Alciphron* replied, that for his  
part he meant it in none of those senses, but  
defined Honour to be a certain Ardour or  
Enthusiasm that glowed in the breast of a  
gallant Man. Upon this, *Euphranor* ob-  
served, it was always admitted to put the  
Definition in place of the thing defined.  
Is this allowed, said he, or not? **ALC.**  
It is. **EUPH.** May we not therefore say,  
that a Man of Honour is a warm Man,  
or an Enthusiast? *Alciphron* hearing this  
declared that such exactness was to no  
purpose; that Pedants, indeed, may dis-  
pute and define, but cou'd never reach  
that high sense of Honour, which distin-  
guished the fine Gentleman, and was a  
thing rather to be felt than explained.

II. *Crito*, perceiving that *Alciphron*  
cou'd not bear being pressed any farther  
on that article, and willing to give some  
satisfaction to *Euphranor*, said that of  
himself indeed he should not undertake to  
explain so nice a point, but he wou'd re-  
tail to them part of a conversation he  
once heard between *Nicander* a Minute  
Philosopher, and *Menecles* a Christian,  
upon




DIAL. upon the same subject, which was for  
 III. substance as follows. *M.* From what  
 principle are you Gentlemen virtuous?  
*N.* From Honour. We are Men of Honour. *M.* May not a Man of Honour debauch another's wife, or get drunk, or sell a vote, or refuse to pay his debts, without lessening or tainting his Honour? *N.* He may have the vices and faults of a Gentleman: But is obliged to pay debts of Honour, that is, all such as are contracted by Play. *M.* Is not your Man of Honour always ready to resent Affronts and engage in Duels? *N.* He is ready to demand and give Gentleman's satisfaction upon all proper occasions. *M.* It shou'd seem by this account, that to Ruin tradesmen, Break faith to one's own wife, Corrupt another Man's, Take bribes, Cheat the Public, Cut a Man's throat for a word, are all points consistent with your principle of Honour. *N.* It cannot be denied that we are Men of gallantry, Men of fire, Men who know the world, and all that. *M.* It seems therefore that Honour among Infidels is like Honesty among Pirates: something confined to themselves, and which the Fraternity perhaps may find their account in, but every one else shou'd be constantly on his guard against. By this Dialogue, continued  
*Crito,*

*Crito*, a Man, who lives out of the grand DIAL.  
*Monde*, may be enabled to form some III.  
notion of what the world calls Ho-   
nour and men of Honour.

*EUPH.* I must intreat you not to put me off with *Nicander's* opinion, whom I know nothing of, but rather give me your own judgment, drawn from your own observation upon Men of Honour. *CRI.* If I must pronounce, I can very sincerely assure you that by all I have heard or seen, I cou'd never find, that Honour, considered as a principle distinct from Conscience, Religion, Reason, and Virtue, was more than an empty name. And I do verily believe, that those who build upon that notion have less Virtue than other Men, and that what they have or seem to have is owing to Fashion, (being of the reputable kind) if not to a Conscience early imbued with religious principles, and afterwards retaining a Tincture from them without knowing it. These two principles seem to account for all that looks like Virtue in those Gentlemen. Your Men of Fashion in whom animal life abounds, a sort of Bullies in Morality, who disdain to have it thought they are afraid of Conscience; these descant much upon Honour, and affect to be called Men of Honour, rather than conscientious or honest Men. But,  
by

**DIAL.** by all that that I cou'd ever observe,  
**III.** this specious Character, where there is  
 nothing of Conscience or Religion underneath, to give it life and substance, is no better than a meteor or painted cloud. *EUPH.* I had a confused notion that Honour was something nearly connected with truth, and that Men of Honour were the greatest enemies to all Hypocrisy, Fal-lacy, and Disguise. *CRI.* So far from that, an Infidel who sets up for the nicest Honour shall, without the least grain of Faith or Religion, pretend himself a Christian, take any test, join in any act of worship, kneel, pray, receive the Sacra-ment to serve an interest. The same per-son, without any impeachment of his Ho-nour, shall most solemnly declare and pro-mise in the face of God and the World, that he will love his Wife, and forsaking all others keep only to her, when at the same time it is certain, he intends never to perform one tittle of his vow; and convinceth the whole world of this as soon as he gets her in his power, and her for-tune, for the sake of which this Man of untainted Honour makes no scruple to cheat and lye. *EUPH.* We have a no-tion here in the Country, that it was of all things most odious, and a matter of much risque and hazard, to give the Lye  
 to

to a Man of Honour. *CRI.* It is very *DIAL.*  
true. He abhors to take the Lye but not to *III.*  
tell it. 

*III. Alciphron,* having heard all this with great compofure of mind and countenance, fpake as follows. You are not to think, that our greateft strength lies in our greateft Number, Libertines and meer Men of Honour. No: we have among us Philosophers of a very different character, Men of curious contemplation, not governed by fuch grofs things as Senfe and Custom, but of an abftracted Virtue and fublime Morals: and the lefs religious the more virtuous. For Virtue of the high and difinterefted kind no Man is fo well qualified as an Infidel, it being a mean and felfifh thing to be virtuous through fear or hope. The notion of a Providence and future State of Rewards and Punifhments, may indeed tempt or fcare Men of abject fpirit into practices contrary to the natural bent of their Souls, but will never produce a true and genuine Virtue. To go to the bottom of things, to analyfe Virtue into its firft principles, and fix a fcheme of Duty on its true bafis, you muft underftand, that there is an idea of Beauty natural to the mind of Man. This all Men defire, this they are pleafed and  
M delighted



DIAL. delighted with for its own sake, purely  
III. from an Instinct of Nature. A Man needs  
no arguments to make him discern and  
approve what is Beautiful; it strikes at  
first sight and attracts without a reason.  
And as this Beauty is found in the shape  
and form of corporeal things; so also is  
there analogous to it a Beauty of another  
kind, an order, a symmetry, and comeli-  
ness in the moral world. And as the Eye  
perceiveth the one, so the Mind doth by a  
certain interior sense perceive the other,  
which sense, talent, or faculty is ever  
quickest and purest in the noblest Minds.  
Thus as by sight I discern the Beauty of  
a Plant or an Animal, even so the mind  
apprehends the moral Excellence, the  
Beauty, and Decorum of Justice and  
Temperance. And as we readily pro-  
nounce a Dress becoming or an Attitude  
graceful, we can, with the same free un-  
tutored judgment, at once declare, whe-  
ther this or that Conduct or Action be  
comely and beautiful. To relish this kind  
of Beauty, there must be a delicate and  
fine Taste: But where there is this natu-  
ral Taste, nothing further is wanting,  
either as a principle to convince, or as a  
motive to induce Men to the love of Vir-  
tue. And more or less there is of this  
Taste or sense in every creature that hath  
Reason.

Reason. All Rational Beings are by DIAL. nature social. They are drawn one towards III. another by natural affections: they unite and incorporate into families, clubs, parties, and commonwealths by mutual Sympathy. As by means of the sensitive Soul, our several distinct parts and members do consent towards the animal Functions, and are connected in one Whole: even so, the several parts of these Rational Systems or Bodies Politic, by virtue of this moral or interior Sense, are held together, have a fellow-feeling, do succour and protect each other, and jointly cooperate towards the same end. Hence that joy in Society, that propension towards doing good to our Kind, that gratulation and delight in beholding the virtuous deeds of other Men, or in reflecting on our own. By contemplation of the fitness and order of the parts of a moral System, regularly operating, and knit together by benevolent affections, the Mind of Man attaineth to the highest notion of Beauty, Excellence, and Perfection: Seised and rapt with this sublime idea, our Philosophers do infinitely despise and pity, whoever shall propose or accept any other motive to Virtue. Interest is a mean ungenerous thing, destroying the merit of Virtue, and Falshood of every kind is inconsistent with the genuine spirit

M 2                      of

**DIAL.** of Philosophy. *CRI.* The Love therefore that you bear to moral Beauty, and your passion for abstracted Truth, will not suffer you to think with patience of those fraudulent Impositions upon Mankind, Providence, the Immortality of the Soul, and a Future Retribution of rewards and punishments; which under the notion of promoting do, it seems, destroy all true Virtue, and at the same time contradict and disparage your noble Theories, manifestly tending to the perturbation and disquiet of Mens minds, and filling them with fruitless hopes and vain terrors.

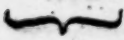
*ALC.* Mens first Thoughts and natural Notions are the best in moral matters. And there is no need, that Mankind shou'd be preached, or reasoned, or frightened into Virtue, a thing so natural and congenial to every Humane Soul. Now if this be the case, as it certainly is, it follows that all the ends of Society are secured without Religion, and that an Infidel bids fair to be the most virtuous Man, in a true, sublime and heroic Sense.

**IV. EUPH.** O *Alciphron*, while you talk, I feel an affection in my soul like the trembling of one lute, upon striking the unison strings of another. Doubtless there is a Beauty of the mind, a Charm in  
Virtue

Virtue, a Symmetry and Proportion in the DIAL.  
moral world. This moral Beauty was III.  
known to the ancients by the name of *Honestum* or τὸ καλόν. And in order to  
know its force and influence, it may not  
be amiss to inquire, what it was under-  
stood to be, and what light it was placed  
in by those who first considered it, and  
gave it a name: τὸ καλόν according to  
*Aristotle* is the ἐπαινετὸν or laudable, ac-  
cording to *Plato* it is the ἡδὺ or ὠφέλιμον,  
pleasant or profitable, which is meant  
with respect to a reasonable mind and its  
true interest. Now I wou'd fain know  
whether a mind, which considers an  
action as laudable, be not carried beyond  
the bare action it self, to regard the opi-  
nion of others concerning it? *ALC.* It  
is. *EUPH.* And whether this be a suf-  
ficient ground or principle of Virtue, for  
a Man to act upon, when he thinks him-  
self removed from the eye and observa-  
tion of every other intelligent Being?  
*ALC.* It seems not. *EUPH.* Again, I ask  
whether a Man who doth a thing pleasant  
or profitable as such, might not be suppo-  
sed to forbear doing it, or even to do the  
contrary, upon the prospect of greater  
pleasure or profit? *ALC.* He might.  
*EUPH.* Doth it not follow from hence,  
that the Beauty of Virtue or τὸ καλόν, in  
M 3 either



DIAL. either *Aristotle's* or *Plato's* sense, is not a

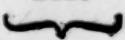
III.  sufficient principle or ground, to engage sensual and worldly-minded Men in the practice of it? *ALC.* What then? *EUPH.* Why then, it will follow that Hope of reward and Fear of punishment are highly expedient, to cast the balance of pleasant and profitable on the side of virtue, and thereby very much conduce to the benefit of Humane Society. *Alciphron* upon this appealed; Gentlemen, said he, you are witnesses of this unfair proceeding of *Euphranor*, who argues against us, from explications given by *Plato* and *Aristotle* of the Beauty of Virtue, which are things we have nothing to say to; the Philosophers of our Sect abstracting from all Praise, Pleasure, and Interest, when they are enamoured and transported with that sublime Idea. I beg pardon, replied *Euphranor*, for supposing the Minute Philosophers of our days think like those ancient Sages. But you must tell me, *Alciphron*, since you do not think fit, to adopt the sense of *Plato* or *Aristotle*, what sense it is in which you understand the Beauty of Virtue? Define it, explain it, make me to understand your meaning, that so we may argue about the same thing, without which we can never come to a conclusion.

V. *ALC.*

DIAL.  
III.

V. *ALC.* Some things are better understood by definitions and descriptions, but I have always observed that those who wou'd define, explain, and dispute about this point, make the least of it. Moral Beauty is of so peculiar and abstracted a nature, something so subtle, fine, and fugacious, that it will not bear being handled and inspected, like every gross and common subject. You will, therefore, pardon me, if I stand upon my Philosophic liberty; and choose ~~rather~~ to intrench my self, within the general and indefinite sense, rather than, by entering into a precise and particular explication of this Beauty, perchance lose sight of it, or give you some hold whereon to cavil, and infer, and raise doubts, queries, and difficulties about a point as clear as the Sun when no body reasons upon it. *EUPH.* How say you, *Alciphron*, is that notion clearest when it is not considered? *ALC.* I say it is rather to be felt than understood, a certain *je ne sçay quoy*. An object, not of the discursive faculty, but of a peculiar sense which is properly called the moral sense, being adapted to the perception of moral Beauty, as the Eye to colours, or the Ear to sounds. *EUPH.* That Men have certain instinctive Sensations or Passions from nature, which make them

DIAL. amiable and useful to each other, I am  
 III. clearly convinced. Such are a Fellow-feel-  
 ing with the distressed, a Tenderness for  
 our offspring, an Affection towards our  
 friends, our neighbours, and our country,  
 an Indignation against things base, cruel,  
 or unjust. These Passions are implanted in  
 the Humane Soul, with several other  
 fears and appetites, aversions and desires,  
 some of which are strongest and upper-  
 most in one mind, others in another.  
 Shou'd it not therefore seem a very uncer-  
 tain guide in morals, for a Man to fol-  
 low his passion or inward feeling? and  
 wou'd not this rule infallibly lead diffe-  
 rent Men different ways, according to  
 the prevalency of this or that appetite or  
 passion? *ALC.* I do not deny it. *EUPH.*  
 And will it not follow from hence, that  
 Duty and Virtue are in a fairer way of  
 being practis'd, if Men are led by Reason  
 and Judgment, balancing low and sen-  
 sual pleasures with those of a higher  
 kind, comparing present losses with future  
 gains, and the uneasiness and disgust of  
 every Vice with the delightful practice of  
 the opposite Virtue, and the pleasing re-  
 flexions and hopes which attend it? Or  
 can there be a stronger motive to Virtue,  
 than the shewing that considered in all  
 lights it is every Man's true interest?

VI. *ALC.* I tell you, *Euphranor*, we DIAL.  
contemn the Virtue of that Man, who III.  
computes and deliberates, and must have   
a reason for being virtuous. The refined  
Moralists of our Sect are ravished and  
transported with the abstract Beauty of  
Virtue. They disdain all forinsecal mo-  
tives to it; and love Virtue only for Vir-  
tue's sake. Oh Rapture! Oh Enthusiasm!  
Oh the Quintessence of Beauty! Methinks  
I cou'd dwell for ever on this Contem-  
plation: But rather than entertain my  
self, I must endeavour to convince you.  
Make an experiment on the first Man  
you meet. Propose a villanous or un-  
just action. Take his first sense of the  
matter, and you shall find he detests it.  
He may, indeed, be afterwards misled by  
Arguments or overpowered by Temptation,  
but his original unpremeditated and ge-  
nuine thoughts are just and orthodox. How  
can we account for this but by a moral  
sense, which, left to it self, hath as quick  
and true a perception of the Beauty and  
Deformity of Humane Actions, as the Eye  
hath of Colours? *EUPH.* May not this  
be sufficiently accounted for, by Con-  
science, Affection, Passion, Education,  
Reason, Custom, Religion, which princi-  
ples and habits, for ought I know, may  
be what you metaphorically call a Moral  
Sense.



DIAL. sense. *ALC.* What I call a moral sense is  
 III. strictly, properly, and truly such, and in  
 { kind different from all those things you  
 enumerate. It is what all men have though  
 all may not observe it. Upon this *Eupbra-*  
*nor* smiled and said, *Alciphron* has made  
 discoveries where I least expected it. For,  
 said he, in regard to every other point, I  
 shou'd hope to learn from him, but for  
 the knowledge of my self, or the faculties  
 and powers of my own mind, I shou'd  
 have looked at home. And there I might  
 have looked long enough, without finding  
 this new talent, which even now after be-  
 ing tutored I cannot comprehend. For  
*Alciphron*, I must needs say, is too Sublime  
 and Ænigmatical upon a point, which of  
 all others ought to be most clearly under-  
 stood. I have often heard that your deepest  
 adepts and oldest professors in science are  
 the obscurest. *Lyficles* is young and speaks  
 plain. Wou'd he but favour us with his  
 sense of this point, it might perhaps prove  
 more upon a level with my apprehension.

VII. *Lyficles* shook his head, and in a  
 grave and earnest manner addressed the  
 Company. Gentlemen, said he, *Alciphron*  
 stands upon his own legs. I have no part  
 in these refined notions he is at present en-  
 gaged to defend. If I must subdue my  
 passions,

passions, abstract, contemplate, be enamoured of Virtue; in a word, if I must be an Enthusiast, I owe so much deference to the laws of my Country, as to choose being an Enthusiast in their way. Besides, it is better being so for some end than for none. This Doctrine hath all the solid inconveniences, without the amusing hopes and prospects of the Christian. *ALC.* I never counted on *Lyficles* for my Second in this point; which after all doth not need his assistance or explication. All subjects ought not to be treated in the same manner. The way of Definition and Division is dry and pedantic. Besides, the subject is sometimes too obscure, sometimes too simple for this method. One while we know too little of a point, another too much, to make it plainer by discourse. *CRI.* To hear *Alciphron* talk, puts me in mind of that Ingenious *Greek*, who having wrapt a mans brother up in a cloak, asked him whether he knew that person? being ready, either by keeping on, or pulling off the cloak, to confute his answer whatever it shou'd be. For my part I believe, if matters were fairly stated, that rational satisfaction, that peace of mind, that inward comfort, and conscientious joy, which a good Christian finds in good actions, wou'd not be found to fall short  
of

**DIAL.** of all the Ecstasy, Rapture, and Enthusiasm  
**III.** supposed to be the effect of that high and  
 ~~~~~ undescribed principle. In earnest can any  
 Ecstasy be higher, any Rapture more affecting, than that which springs from the love of God and Man, from a Conscience void of offence, and an inward discharge of Duty, with the secret delight, trust, and hope that attends it? *ALC.* O *Euphranor*, we Votaries of Truth do not envy, but pity, the groundless joys and mistaken hopes of a Christian. And, as for Conscience and rational Pleasure, How can we allow a Conscience without allowing a vindictive Providence? Or how can we suppose, the charm of Virtue consists in any pleasure, or benefit attending virtuous actions, without giving great advantages to the Christian Religion, which, it seems excites its believers to Virtue by the highest Interests and Pleasures in reversion. Alas! shou'd we grant this, there wou'd be a door opened to all those rusty Declaimers upon the necessity and usefulness of the great points of Faith, the Immortality of the Soul, a Future State, Rewards and Punishments, and the like exploded Conceits; which, according to our system and principles, may perhaps produce a low, popular, interested kind of Virtue, but must absolutely destroy and extinguish it in the sublime and heroic sense.

VIII. *EUPH.* What you now say is DIAL.  
very intelligible: I wish I understood your III.  
main principle as well. *ALC.* And are ~  
you then in earnest at a loss? Is it possible  
you shou'd have no notion of Beauty, or  
that having it you shou'd not know it to  
be amiable, amiable I say, in it self, and  
for it self? *EUPH.* Pray tell me, *Alci-*  
*phron*, are all mankind agreed in the no-  
tion of a beauteous face? *ALC.* Beauty  
in Humane Kind seems to be of a more  
mixt and various nature; forasmuch as  
the passions, sentiments, and qualities of the  
Soul being seen through and blending with  
the features, work differently on different  
minds, as the sympathy is more or less.  
But with regard to other things is there no  
steady principle of Beauty? Is there upon  
earth a Humane mind without the idea of  
order, harmony, and proportion? *EUPH.*  
O *Alciphron*, it is my weakness that I am  
apt to be lost and bewildered in abstrac-  
tions and generalities, but a particular thing  
is better suited to my faculties. I find it  
easy to consider and keep in view the ob-  
jects of sense, let us therefore try to dis-  
cover what their Beauty is, or wherein it  
consists; and so, by the help of these sen-  
sible things, as a scale or ladder, ascend to  
moral and intellectual Beauty. Be pleased  
then to inform me, what it is we call  
Beauty



DIAL. Beauty in the objects of sense? *ALC.*

III. Every one knows Beauty is that which  
 { pleases. *EUPH.* There is then Beauty in  
 the smell of a Rose, or the taste of an  
 Apple. *ALC.* By no means. Beauty is,  
 to speak properly, perceived only by the  
 eye. *EUPH.* It cannot therefore be defini-  
 ned in general that which pleaseth. *ALC.*  
 I grant it cannot. *EUPH.* How then  
 shall we limit or define it? *Alciphron*, after  
 a short pause, said, that Beauty consisted in  
 a certain symmetry or proportion pleasing  
 to the eye. *EUPH.* Is this proportion one  
 and the same in all things, or is it different  
 in different kinds of things? *ALC.* Different  
 doubtless: The proportions of an Ox wou'd  
 not be beautiful in a Horse. And we may  
 observe also in things inanimate, that the  
 Beauty of a Table, a Chair, a Door, con-  
 sists in different proportions. *EUPH.*  
 Doth not this proportion imply the rela-  
 tion of one thing to another? *ALC.* It  
 doth. *EUPH.* And are not these relations  
 founded in size and shape? *ALC.* They  
 are. *EUPH.* And to make the propor-  
 tions just, must not those mutual relations  
 of size and shape in the parts be such, as  
 shall make the whole compleat and perfect  
 in its kind? *ALC.* I grant they must.  
*EUPH.* Is not a thing said to be perfect  
 in its kind, when it answers the end for  
 which

which it was made? *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* DIAL. III.

The parts, therefore, in true proportions must be so related, and adjusted to one another, as that they may best conspire to the use and operation of the whole. *ALC.*

It seems so. *EUPH.* But the comparing Parts one with another, the considering them as belonging to one Whole, and the referring this whole to its use or end, shou'd seem the work of Reason: Shou'd it not? *ALC.* It shou'd. *EUPH.*

Proportions therefore are not, strictly speaking, perceived by the sense of Sight, but only by Reason through the means of Sight. *ALC.* This I grant, *EUPH.* Con-

sequently Beauty, in your sense of it, is an object, not of the eye, but of the mind. *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* The Eye,

therefore, alone cannot see that a Chair is handsom, or a Door well proportioned.

*ALC.* It seems to follow; but I am not clear as to this point. *EUPH.* Let us see

if there be any difficulty in it. Cou'd the Chair you sit on, think you, be reckon'd well proportioned or handsom, if it had not such a height, breadth, wideness, and was not so far reclined as to afford a convenient seat? *ALC.* It could not. *EUPH.*

The Beauty, therefore, or Symmetry of a Chair cannot be apprehended but by knowing its use, and comparing its figure with that

DIAL. that use, which cannot be done by the Eye  
 III. alone, but is the effect of Judgment. It  
 is therefore, one thing to see an Object,  
 and another to discern its Beauty. *ALC.*  
 I admit this to be true.

IX. *EUPH.* The Architects judge a Door to be of a beautiful Proportion, when its height is double of the breadth. But if you shou'd invert a well-proportion'd Door making its breadth become the height, and its height the breadth, the figure would still be the same, but without that Beauty in one Situation, which it had in another. What can be the cause of this, but that in the forementioned Supposition, the Door wou'd not yield a convenient entrance to Creatures of a Humane Figure? But, if in any other part of the Universe, there shou'd be supposed rational animals of an inverted Stature, they must be supposed to invert the Rule for Proportion of Doors; and to them that wou'd appear beautiful, which to us was disagreeable. *ALC.* Against this I have no Objection. *EUPH.* Tell me, *Alciphron*, is there not something truly decent and beautiful in Dress? *ALC.* Doubtless there is. *EUPH.* Are any likelier to give us an Idea of this Beauty in Dress, than Painters and Sculptors, whose proper business and study it is,

is, to aim at graceful Representations? DIAL.  
 ALC. I believe not. EUPH. Let us then III.

examine the Draperies of the great Masters in these Arts: How, for instance, they use to clothe a Matron or a Man of Rank. Cast an eye on those Figures (said he, pointing to some Prints after *Raphael* and *Guido*, that hung upon the Wall) what appearance, do you think, an *English* Courtier or Magistrate, with his *Gothic*, succinct, plaited Garment, and his full-bottom'd Wig, or one of our Ladies in her unnatural Dress pinched, and stiffened, and enlarged with Hoops and Whale-bone and Buckram, must make, among those Figures so decently clad in Draperies that fall into such a variety of natural, easy, and ample Folds, that appear with so much dignity and simplicity, that cover the Body without encumbering it, and adorn without altering the Shape? ALC. Truly I think they must make a very ridiculous appearance. EUPH. And what do you think this proceeds from? Whence is it that the Eastern Nations, the *Greeks*, and the *Romans*, naturally ran into the most becoming Dresses, while our *Gothic* Gentry, after so many Centuries racking their Inventions, mending, and altering, and improving, and whirling about in a perpetual rotation of Fashions, have never

N

yet



DIAL. yet had the luck to stumble on any that was  
 III. not absurd and ridiculous? Is it not from

hence, that instead of consulting Use, Reason, and Convenience, they abandon themselves to irregular Fancy, the unnatural Parent of Monsters? Whereas the Ancients, considering the use and end of Dress, made it subservient to the Freedom, Ease, and Convenience of the Body, and, having no Notion of mending or changing the natural Shape, they aimed only at shewing it with decency and advantage. And, if this be so, are we not to conclude that the Beauty of Dress depends on its subserviency to certain Ends and Uses?

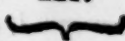
ALC. This appears to be true. EUPH. This subordinate relative nature of Beauty, perhaps will be yet plainer, if we examine the respective Beauties of a Horse and a Pillar. *Virgil's* Description of the former is,

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*Illi ardua cervix,  
 Argutumque caput, brevis alvus, obesaque terga,  
 Luxuriatque toris animosum pectus.*

Now I wou'd fain know, whether the perfections and uses of a Horse may not be reduced to these three points, Courage, Strength, and Speed; and whether each of the Beauties enumerated doth not occasion, or betoken, one of these Perfections?

After

After the same manner, if we inquire in-DIAL.  
 to the Parts and Proportions of a beautiful III.  
 Pillar, we shall perhaps find them answer   
 to this same Idea. Those who have con-  
 sidered the Theory of Architecture, tell  
 us\*, the Proportions of the three *Grecian*  
 Orders were taken from the Humane Body,  
 as the most beautiful and perfect Produc-  
 tion of Nature. Hence were derived those  
 graceful Ideas of Columns, which had a  
 Character of Strength without clumsiness,  
 or of Delicacy without weakness. Those  
 beautiful Proportions were, I say, taken  
 originally from Nature which, in her  
 Creatures, as hath been already observed,  
 referreth them to some end, use, or design.  
 The *Gonfirezza* also, or swelling, and the  
 diminution of a Pillar, is it not in such  
 proportion as to make it appear strong and  
 light at the same time? In the same manner  
 must not the whole Entablature, with its  
 Projections be so proportioned, as to seem  
 great but not heavy, light but not little,  
 inasmuch as a Deviation into either ex-  
 treme wou'd thwart that reason and use of  
 Things, wherein their Beauty is founded,  
 and to which it is subordinate? The En-  
 tablature and all its Parts and Ornaments,  
 Architrave, Freeze, Cornice, Triglyphs,

\* See the learned Patriarch of *Aquileia's* Commentary  
 on *Vitruvius*, l. 4. c. 1.

DIAL. Metopes, Modiglions, and the rest, have  
 III. each an use or appearance of use, in giving  
 firmness and union to the Building, in protecting it from the Weather, and casting off the Rain, in representing the Ends of Beams with their intervals, the production of Rafters, and so forth. And if we consider the graceful Angles in Frontispieces, the Spaces between the Columns, or the Ornaments of their Capitels, shall we not find, that their Beauty riseth from the appearance of Use, or the imitation of natural Things, whose Beauty is originally founded on the same Principle? which is, indeed, the grand distinction between *Græcian* and *Gothic* Architecture, the latter being fantastical, and for the most part founded neither in Nature nor in Reason, in Necessity nor Use, the appearance of which accounts for all the Beauty, Grace, and Ornament of the other. CRI. What *Euphranor* has said confirms the Opinion I always entertained, that the Rules of Architecture were founded, as all other Arts which flourished among the *Greeks*, in Truth, and Nature, and good Sense. But the Ancients, who, from a thorough consideration of the Grounds and Principles of Art, formed their Idea of Beauty, did not always confine themselves strictly to the same Rules and Proportions: But, when-  
 ever

DIAL.  
III.

ever the particular Distance, Position, Elevation, or Dimension of the Fabric or its Parts seemed to require it, made no scruple to depart from them, without deserting the original Principles of Beauty, which governed whatever Deviations they made. This latitude or licence might not, perhaps, be safely trusted with most modern Architects, who in their bold Sallies seem to act without aim or design, and to be governed by no Idea, no Reason or principle of Art, but pure Caprice, joined with a thorough contempt of that noble Simplicity of the Ancients, without which there can be no unity, gracefulness, or grandeur in their Works; which of consequence must serve only to disfigure and dishonour the Nation, being so many Monuments to future Ages of the opulence and ill taste of the present; which, it is to be feared, wou'd succeed as wretchedly, and make as mad work in other Affairs, were Men to follow, instead of rules, precepts and models, their own taste and first thoughts of Beauty. *ALC.* I shou'd now, methinks, be glad to see a little more distinctly the use and tendency of this Digression upon Architecture. *EUPH.* Was not Beauty the very thing we inquired after? *ALC.* It was. *EUPH.* What think you, *Alciphron*, can the appearance



DIAL. of a thing please at this time, and in this place, which pleased two thousand Years ago, and two thousand Miles off, without some real principle of Beauty? *ALC.* It cannot. *EUPH.* And is not this the case with respect to a just piece of Architecture? *ALC.* No body denies it. *EUPH.* Architecture, the noble Offspring of judgment and fancy, was gradually formed in the most polite and knowing Countries of *Asia, Egypt, Greece, and Italy.* It was cherished and esteemed by the most flourishing States, and most renowned Princes, who with vast expence improved and brought it to perfection. It seems, above all other Arts, peculiarly conversant about Order, Proportion, and Symmetry. May it not therefore be supposed on all accounts, most likely to help us to some rational Notion of the *je ne sçay quoy* in Beauty? And, in effect, have we not learned from this Digression, that as there is no Beauty without Proportion, so Proportions are to be esteemed just and true, only as they are relative to some certain use or end, their Aptitude and Subordination to which end is, at bottom, that which makes them please and charm? *ALC.* I admit all this to be true.

X. *EUPH.*

X. *EUPH.* According to this Doctrine, DIAL.  
I wou'd fain know what Beauty can be III.  
found in a moral System, formed, connected and governed by Chance, Fate, or any other blind unthinking Principle; forasmuch as without thought there can be no end or design, and without an end there can be no use, and without use there is no aptitude or fitness of Proportion, from whence Beauty springs? *ALC.* May we not suppose a certain vital Principle of Beauty, Order, and Harmony diffused throughout the World, without supposing a Providence inspecting, punishing, and rewarding the moral Actions of Men? Without supposing the Immortality of the Soul, or a Life to come, in a word, without admitting any part of what is commonly called Faith, Worship, and Religion? *CRI.* Either you suppose this Principle intelligent, or not intelligent: If the latter, it is all one with Chance or Fate which was just now argued against: If the former, let me intreat *Alciphron* to explain to me, wherein consists the Beauty of a moral System, with a supreme Intelligence at the head of it, which neither protects the innocent, punishes the wicked, nor rewards the virtuous? To suppose indeed a Society of rational Agents acting under the Eye of Providence, concurring

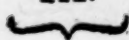
DIAL. in one design to promote the common benefit of the whole, and conforming their  
III. Actions to the established Laws and Order of the Divine Parental Wisdom: Wherein each particular Agent shall not consider himself apart, but as the Member of a great City, whose Author and Founder is God: In which the Civil Laws are no other, than the Rules of Virtue, and the Duties of Religion: And where every one's true Interest is combined with his Duty: To suppose this wou'd be delightful; on this Supposition a Man need be no Stoic or Knight-errant, to account for his Virtue. In such a System Vice is Madness, Cunning is Folly, Wisdom and Virtue are the same thing, where, notwithstanding all the crooked Paths and By-roads, the wayward Appetites and Inclinations of Men, sovereign Reason is sure to reform whatever seems amiss, to reduce that which is devious, make straight that which is crooked, and in the last Act wind up the whole Plot, according to the exactest Rules of Wisdom and Justice. In such a System or Society, governed by the wisest precepts, enforced by the highest rewards and discouragements, it is delightful to consider, how the regulation of Laws, the distribution of Good and Evil, the aim of moral Agents, do all conspire in due Subordination

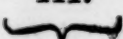
ordination to promote the noblest End, to DIAL.  
 wit, the compleat Happiness or Well-being of the whole. In contemplating the Beauty of such a moral System, we may cry out with the Psalmist, *Very excellent Things are spoken of thee, thou City of God.* III.

XI. In a System of Spirits, subordinate to the Will, and under the Direction, of the Father of Spirits, governing them by Laws, and conducting them by Methods suitable to wise and good Ends, there will be great Beauty. But in an incoherent, fortuitous System, governed by Chance, or in a blind System governed by Fate, or in any System where Providence doth not preside, how can Beauty be, which cannot be without order, which cannot be without design? When a Man is conscious that his Will is inwardly conformed to the Divine Will, producing Order and Harmony in the Universe, and conducting the whole by the justest Methods to the best End: This gives a beautiful Idea. But on the other hand, a Consciousness of Virtue overlooked, neglected, distressed by Men, and not regarded or rewarded by God, ill-used in this World, without Hope or Prospect of being better used in another, I wou'd fain know, where is the Pleasure of this Reflexion, where is the Beauty



DIAL. Beauty of this Scene? Or how cou'd any

III.  Man, in his Senses, think the spreading  
such Notions the way to spread or propa-  
gate Virtue in the World? Is it not, I be-  
seech you, an ugly System in which you  
can suppose no Law and prove no Duty,  
wherein Men thrive by Wickedness and  
suffer by Virtue? Wou'd it not be a dis-  
agreeable Sight to see an honest Man  
peeled by Sharpers, to see virtuous Men  
injured and despised while Vice triumph'd?  
An Enthusiast may entertain himself with  
Visions and fine Talk about such a Sys-  
tem; but when it comes to be considered  
by Men of cool Heads, and close Reason,  
I believe they will find no Beauty nor Per-  
fection in it; nor will it appear, that such  
a moral System can possibly come from the  
same Hand, or be of a piece with the na-  
tural, throughout which there shines so  
much Order, Harmony, and Proportion.  
*ALC.* Your Discourse serves to confirm  
me in my Opinion. You may remember,  
I declared, that touching this Beauty of  
Morality in the high Sense, a Man's first  
Thoughts are best; and that, if we pre-  
tend to examine, and inspect, and reason,  
we are in danger to lose sight of it. That  
in Fact there is such a thing cannot be  
doubted, when we consider that in these  
Days some of our Philosophers have a  
high

high Sense of Virtue, without the least DIAL.  
 Notion of Religion, a clear Proof of the III.  
 Usefulness and Efficacy of our Principles! 

XII. *CRI.* Not to dispute the Virtue of Minute Philosophers, we may venture to call its Cause in question, and make a doubt, whether it be an inexplicable Enthusiastic Notion of Moral Beauty, or rather, as to me it seems, what was already assigned by *Euphranor*, Complexion, Custom, and Religious Education? But, allowing what Beauty you please to Virtue in an Irreligious System, it cannot be less in a Religious, unless you will suppose that her Charms diminish as her Dowry increaseth. The Truth is, a Believer hath all the Motives from the Beauty of Virtue in any sense whatsoever that an Unbeliever can possibly have, besides other Motives which an Unbeliever hath not. Hence it is plain, those of your Sect, who have Moral Virtue, owe it not to their peculiar Tenets, which serve only to lessen the Motives to Virtue. Those therefore, who are good, are less good, and those who are bad are more bad, than they wou'd have been were they Believers. *EUPH.* To me it seems, those heroic infidel Inamorato's of abstracted Beauty are much to be pitied, and much to be admired. *Lyficles*  
 hearing

DIAL. hearing this, said with some Impatience;

III. Gentlemen, You shall have my whole  
 Thoughts upon this Point plain and frank.  
 All that is said about a Moral Sense, or  
 Moral Beauty, in any signification, either  
 of *Alciphron* or *Euphranor*, or any other,  
 I take to be at bottom meer Bubble and  
 Pretence. The καλόν and the πρέπον, the  
 beautiful and the decent, are Things out-  
 ward, relative, and superficial, which have  
 no Effect in the dark, but are specious  
 Topics to discourse and exspatiate upon,  
 as some formal Pretenders of our Sect,  
 though in other Points very Orthodox, are  
 used to do. But shou'd one of them get  
 into Power, you wou'd find him no such  
 Fool as *Euphranor* imagines. He wou'd  
 soon shew he had found out, that the  
 Love of one's Country is a Prejudice:  
 That Mankind are Rogues and Hypocrites,  
 and that it were Folly to sacrifice one's self  
 for the sake of such: That all Regards  
 center in this Life, and that, as this Life  
 is to every Man his own Life, it clearly  
 follows that Charity begins at Home. Be-  
 nevolence to Mankind is perhaps pretend-  
 ed, but Benevolence to himself is practised  
 by the Wise. The livelier sort of our Phi-  
 losophers do not scruple to own these  
 Maxims; and as for the graver, if they  
 are true to their Principles, one may guess  
 what

what they must think at the Bottom. DIAL.  
CRI. Whatever may be the Effect of III.  
pure Theory upon certain select Spirits, of  
a peculiar Make, or in some other Parts  
of the World, I do verily think that in  
this Country of ours, Reason, Religion,  
Law, are all together little enough to  
subdue the Outward to the Inner Man; and  
that it must argue a wrong Head and weak  
Judgment to suppose, that without them  
Men will be enamoured of the golden  
Mean. To which my Countrymen per-  
haps are less inclined than others, there  
being in the Make of an *English* Mind a  
certain Gloom and Eagerness, which car-  
ries to the sad Extreme; Religion to Fa-  
naticism; Free-thinking to Atheism; Li-  
berty to Rebellion: Nor shou'd we ven-  
ture to be governed by Taste, even in mat-  
ters of less Consequence. The Beautiful in  
Dress, Furniture, and Building, is, as *Euphranor*  
hath observed, something real and  
well grounded: And yet our *English* do not  
find it out of themselves. What wretched  
Work do they and other Northern People  
make, when they follow their own Taste  
of Beauty in any of these Particulars, in-  
stead of acquiring the true, which is to  
be got from ancient Models and the Prin-  
ciples of Art, as in the Case of Virtue from  
great Models and Meditation, so far as  
natu-



DIAL. natural Means can go? But in no Case is  
 III. it to be hoped, that τὸ καλὸν will be the  
 ~~~~~ leading Idea of the many, who have quick  
 Senses, strong Passions, and gross Intel-  
 lects.

XIII. *ALC.* The fewer they are, the more ought we esteem and admire such Philosophers, whose Souls are touched and transported with this sublime Idea. *CRI.* But then one might expect from such Philosophers, so much good Sense and Philanthropy, as to keep their Tenets to themselves, and consider their weak Brethren, who are more strongly affected by certain Senses and Notions of another kind, than that of the Beauty of pure disinterested Virtue. *Cratylus*, a Man prejudiced against the Christian Religion, of a crazy Constitution, of a Rank above most Mens Ambition, and a Fortune equal to his Rank, had little Capacity for sensual Vices, or Temptation to dishonest ones. *Cratylus* having talked himself, or imagined that he had talked himself, into a Stoical Enthusiasm about the Beauty of Virtue, did, under the Pretence of making Men heroically virtuous, endeavour to destroy the Means of making them reasonably and humanly so: A clear Instance, that neither Birth nor Books nor Conversation can introduce  
 a Know-

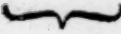
a Knowledge of the World into a conceited Mind, which will ever be its own Object, and contemplate Mankind in its own Mirror! DIAL. III.

*ALC.* *Cratylus* was a Lover of Liberty, and of his Country, and had a mind to make Men incorrupt and virtuous, upon the purest and most disinterested Principles. *CRI.* His Conduct seems just as wise, as if a Monarch shou'd give out, that there was neither Jail nor Executioner in his Kingdom to enforce the Laws, but that it wou'd be beautiful to observe them, and that in so doing Men wou'd taste the pure Delight which results from Order and *Decorum*. *ALC.* After all, is it not true that certain ancient Philosophers, of great Note, held the same Opinion with *Cratylus*, declaring that he did not come up to the Character, or deserve the Title of a good Man, who practised Virtue for the sake of any thing but its own Beauty? *CRI.* I believe, indeed, that some of the Ancients said such Things as gave Occasion for this Opinion. *Aristotle* \* distinguisheth between two Characters of a good Man, the one he calleth ἀγαθός, or simply good, the other καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός, from whence the Compound Term καλοκαγαθία, which cannot, perhaps, be render'd by any one Word in our Language. But his Sense is

\* *Ethic. ad Eudemum, lib. 7. cap. ult.*

plainly

DIAL. plainly this: ἀγαθὸς he defineth to be that

III.  Man to whom the good Things of Nature are good ; for, according to him, those Things, which are vulgarly esteemed the greatest Goods, as Riches, Honours, Power, and bodily Perfections, are indeed good by Nature, but they happen nevertheless to be hurtful and bad to some Persons, upon the account of evil Habits: Inasmuch as neither a Fool, nor an unjust Man, nor an Intemperate can be at all the better for the Use of them, any more than a sick Man for using the Nourishment proper for those who are in Health. But καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθὸς is that Man in whom are to be found all Things worthy and decent and laudable, purely as such, and for their own sake, and who practiseth Virtue from no other Motive but the sole Love of her own innate Beauty. That Philosopher observes likewise, that there is a certain political Habit, such as the *Spartans* and others had, who thought Virtue was to be valued and practised on account of the natural Advantages that attend it. For which Reason he adds, They are indeed good Men, but they have not the καλοκαγαθία, or supreme consummate Virtue. From hence it is plain that, according to *Aristotle*, a Man may be a good Man without believing Virtue its own Reward, or being only moved

moved to Virtue by the Sense of Moral Beauty. It is also plain, that he distinguisheth the political Virtues of Nations, which the Publick is every where concerned to maintain, from this sublime and speculative kind. It might also be observed, that his exalted Idea did consist with supposing a Providence which inspects and rewards the Virtues of the best Men. For saith he in another Place\*, if the Gods have any Care of Humane Affairs, as it appears they have, it shou'd seem reasonable to suppose, they are most delighted with the most excellent Nature, and most approaching their own, which is the Mind, and that they will reward those who chiefly love and cultivate what is most dear to them. The same Philosopher observes †, that the Bulk of Mankind are not naturally disposed to be awed by Shame, but by Fear; nor to abstain from vicious Practices, on account of their Deformity, but only of the Punishment which attends them. And again ‡, he tells us that Youth, being of it self averse from Abstinence and Sobriety, shou'd be under the Restraint of Laws regulating their Education and Employment, and that the same Discipline shou'd be continued even after they became Men. For which, saith

\* Ad Nicom. l. 10. c. 8.

† Ibid. c. 9.

‡ Ibid.



DIAL. he, we want Laws, and, in one word, for  
 III. the whole ordering of Life, inasmuch as  
 { the Generality of Mankind obey rather  
 Force than Reason, and are influenced rather  
 by Penalties than the Beauty of Virtue;  
 ζημίας ἢ τῷ καλῷ. From all which  
 it is very plain, what *Aristotle* wou'd have  
 thought of those, who shou'd go about to  
 lessen or destroy the Hopes and Fears of  
 Mankind, in order to make them virtuous on  
 this sole Principle of the Beauty of Virtue.

XIV. *ALC.* But, whatever the *Stagirite* and his Peripatetics might think, is it not certain the Stoics maintained this Doctrine in its highest Sense, asserting the Beauty of Virtue to be all-sufficient, that Virtue was her own Reward, that this alone cou'd make a Man happy, in spite of all those Things which are vulgarly esteemed the greatest Woes and Miseries of Humane Life? And all this they held at the same time that they believed, the Soul of Man to be of a corporeal Nature, and in Death dissipated like a Flame or Vapour.  
*CRI.* It must be owned, the Stoics sometimes talk, as if they believed the Mortality of the Soul. *Seneca* in a Letter of his to *Lucilius*, speaks much like a Minute Philosopher, in this Particular. But in several other Places, he declares himself of  
 a clear

a clear contrary Opinion, affirming that the Souls of Men after Death mount aloft into the Heavens, look down upon Earth, entertain themselves with the Theory of cœlestial Bodies, the Course of Nature, and the Conversation of wise and excellent Men, who having lived in distant Ages and Countries upon Earth, make one Society in the other World. It must also be acknowledged, that *Marcus Antoninus* sometimes speaks of the Soul as perishing, or dissolving into its Elementary Parts: But it is to be noted, that he distinguisheth three Principles in the Composition of Humane Nature, the σῶμα, ψυχὴ, νῆς, \* Body, Soul, Mind, or as he otherwise expresseth himself, σαρκία, πνεύματιον and ἡγεμονικόν, Flesh, Spirit, and governing Principle. What he calls the ψυχὴ, or Soul, containing the brutal Part of our Nature, is indeed represented as a Compound dissoluble, and actually dissolved by Death: But the νῆς or τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, the Mind or ruling Principle he held to be of a pure cœlestial Nature, θεοῦ ἀπόσπασμα a Particle of God, which he sends back intire to the Stars and the Divinity. Besides, among all his magnificent Lessons and splendid Sentiments, upon the Force and Beauty of Virtue, he is positive as to

\* L. 3. c. 16.

DIAL. the Being of God, and that not meerly as

III. a plastic Nature, or Soul of the World,

but in the strict Sense of a Providence inspecting and taking care of Humane Affairs \*. The Stoics therefore, though their Style was high, and often above Truth and Nature, yet, it cannot be said, that they so resolved every Motive to a virtuous Life into the sole Beauty of Virtue, as to endeavour to destroy the Belief of the Immortality of the Soul and a distributive Providence. After all, allowing the disinterested Stoics (therein not unlike our modern Quietists) to have made Virtue its own sole Reward, in the most rigid and absolute Sense, yet what is this to those who are no Stoics? If we adopt the whole Principles of that Sect, admitting their Notions of Good and Evil, their celebrated Apathy, and, in one word, setting up for compleat Stoics, we may possibly maintain this Doctrine with a better Grace; at least it will be of a piece and consistent with the whole. But he who shall borrow this splendid Patch from the Stoics, and hope to make a Figure by inserting it in a Piece of modern Composition, seasoned with the Wit and Notions of these Times, will indeed make a Figure, but

\* Marc. Antonin. l. 2. §. 11.

perhaps

perhaps it may not be in the Eyes of a DIAL.  
wife Man the Figure he intended.

III.

XV. Though it must be owned, the present Age is very indulgent to every thing that aims at profane Raillery; which is alone sufficient to recommend any fantastical Composition to the Public. You may behold the Tinsel of a modern Author pass upon this knowing and learned Age for good Writing; affected Strains for Wit; Pedantry for Politeness; Obscurities for Depths; Ramblings for Flights; the most awkward Imitation for original Humour; and all this upon the sole Merit of a little artful Profaneness. *ALC.* Every one is not alike pleased with Writings of Humour, nor alike capable of them. It is the fine Irony of a Man of Quality, 'That certain Reverend Authors, who can condescend to Lay-wit, are nicely qualified to hit the Air of Breeding and Gentility, and that they will in time, no doubt, refine their Manner to the Edification of the polite World; who have been so long seduced by the way of Raillery and Wit.' The Truth is, the various Taste of Readers requireth various Kinds of Writers. Our Sect hath provided for this with great Judgment. To proselyte the graver sort we have certain



DIAL. profound Men at Reason and Argument.

III. For the Coffee-houses and Populace we have Declaimers of a copious Vein. Of such a Writer it is no Reproach to say, *fluit lutulentus*; he is the fitter for his Readers. Then, for Men of Rank and Politeness we have the finest and wittiest *Railleurs* in the World, whose Ridicule is the sure Test of Truth. EUPH. Tell me, *Alciphron*, are those ingenious *Railleurs* Men of Knowledge? ALC. Very knowing. EUPH. Do they know for Instance the *Copernican* System, or the Circulation of the Blood? ALC. One wou'd think you judg'd of our Sect, by your Country Neighbours: There is no body in Town but knows all those Points. EUPH. You believe then Antipodes, Mountains in the Moon, and the Motion of the Earth. ALC. We do. EUPH. Suppose, five or six Centuries ago, a Man had maintained these Notions among the *beaux Esprits* of an *English* Court; how do you think they would have been received? ALC. With great Ridicule. EUPH. And now it wou'd be ridiculous to ridicule them. ALC. It wou'd. EUPH. But Truth was the same then and now. ALC. It was. EUPH. It shou'd seem, therefore, that Ridicule is no such sovereign Touchstone and Test of Truth, as you Gentle-

Gentlemen imagine. *ALC.* One thing we know: Our Raillery and Sarcasms gall the black Tribe, and that is our Comfort. *CRI.* There is another thing it may be worth your while to know: That Men in a Laughing Fit may applaud a Ridicule, which shall appear contemptible when they come to themselves; witness the Ridicule of *Socrates* by the Comic Poet, the Humour and Reception it met with no more proving that, than the same will yours, to be just, when calmly considered by Men of Sense. *ALC.* After all, thus much is certain, our ingenious Men make Converts by deriding the Principles of Religion. And, take my word, it is the most successful and pleasing Method of Conviction. These Authors laugh Men out of their Religion, as *Horace* did out of their Vices; *Admissi circum præcordia ludunt.* But a Bigot cannot relish or find out their Wit.

DIAL.  
III.

XVI. *CRI.* Wit without Wisdom, if there be such a thing, is hardly worth finding. And as for the Wisdom of these Men, it is of a kind so peculiar one may well suspect it. *Cicero* was a Man of Sense, and no Bigot, nevertheless he makes *Scipio* own himself much more vigilant and vigorous in the Race of Virtue, from

DIAL. supposing Heaven the Prize\*. And he introduceth *Cato* declaring, he wou'd never  
 III. have undergone those virtuous Toils for the Service of the Public, if he had thought his Being was to end with this Life†. *ALC.* I acknowledge *Cato*, *Scipio*, and *Cicero*, were very well for their Times, but you must pardon me, if I do not think they arrived at the high consummate Virtue of our modern Free-thinkers. *EUPH.* It shou'd seem then that Virtue flourisheth more than ever among us. *ALC.* It shou'd. *EUPH.* And this abundant Virtue is owing to the Method taken by your profound Writers to recommend it. *ALC.* This I grant. *EUPH.* But you have acknowledged, that the Enthusiastic Lovers of Virtue are not the many of your Sect, but only a few select Spirits. To which *Alciphron* making no Answer, *Crito* address'd himself to *Euphranor*: To make, said he, a true Estimate of the Worth and Growth of modern Virtue, you are not to count the virtuous Men, but rather to consider the quality of their Virtue. Now you must know, the Virtue of these refined Theorists is something so pure and genuine, that a very little goes far, and is in truth invaluable. To which that reasonable in-

\* Somn. Scipionis.

† De Senectute.

terested Virtue, of the old *English* or *Spartan* kind, can bear no proportion. *EUPH.* DIAL. III.

Tell me, *Alciphron*, are there not Diseases of the Soul, as well as of the Body?

*ALC.* Without doubt. *EUPH.* And are not those Diseases vicious Habits?

*ALC.* They are. *EUPH.* And, as bodily Distempers are cured by Physic, those of the Mind are cured by Philosophy; are they not?

*ALC.* I acknowledge it. *EUPH.* It seems, therefore,

that Philosophy is a Medicine for the Soul of Man. *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* How

shall we be able to judge of Medicines, or know which to prefer? Is it not from the Effects wrought by them? *ALC.* Doubt-

less. *EUPH.* Where an Epidemical Distemper rages, suppose a new Physician

shou'd condemn the known established Practice, and recommend another Method

of Cure, wou'd you not, in proportion as the Bills of Mortality increased, be tempted

to suspect this new Method, notwithstanding all the plausible Discourse of its

Abettors? *ALC.* This serves only to amuse and lead us from the question. *CRI.*

It puts me in mind of my Friend *Lamprocles*, who needed but one Argument against

Infidels. I observed, said he, that, as Infidelity grew, there grew Corruption of

every kind, and new Vices. This simple  
Obser-



DIAL. Observation on matter of Fact was sufficient to make him, notwithstanding the  
 III. Remonstrance of several ingenious Men, imbue and season the Minds of his Children betimes with the Principles of Religion. The new Theories, which our acute Moderns have endeavoured to substitute in place of Religion, have had their full Course in the present Age, and produced their Effect on the Minds and Manners of Men. That Men are Men is a sure Maxim: But it is as sure that *Englishmen* are not the same Men they were; whether better or worse, more or less virtuous, I need not say. Every one may see and judge. Though, indeed, after *Aristides* had been banished, and *Socrates* put to death at *Athens*, a Man, without being a Conjuror, might guess what the Beauty of Virtue cou'd do in *England*. But there is now neither room nor occasion for guessing. We have our own Experience to open our Eyes; which yet if we continue to keep shut, till the Remains of religious Education are quite worn off from the Minds of Men, it is to be feared we shall then open them wide, not to avoid, but to behold and lament our Ruin. *ALC.* Be the Consequences what they will, I can never bring my self to be of a mind with those, who measure Truth by Convenience,

venience. Truth is the only Divinity that I adore. Wherever Truth leads I shall follow. *EUPH.* You have then a Passion for Truth? *ALC.* Undoubtedly. *EUPH.* For all Truths? *ALC.* For all. *EUPH.* To know or to publish them? *ALC.* Both. *EUPH.* What! wou'd you undeceive a Child that was taking

Phyfic? Wou'd you officiously set an Enemy right, that was making a wrong Attack? Wou'd you help an enraged Man to his Sword? *ALC.* In such Cases, common Sense directs one how to behave. *EUPH.* Common Sense, it seems then, must be consulted whether a Truth be salutary or hurtful, fit to be declared or concealed. *ALC.* How! you wou'd have me conceal and stifle the Truth, and keep it to my self? Is this what you aim at? *EUPH.* I only make a plain Inference from what you grant. As for my self, I do not believe your Opinions true. And although you do, you shou'd not therefore, if you wou'd appear consistent with yourself, think it necessary or wise to publish hurtful Truths. What Service can it do Mankind to lessen the Motives to Virtue, or what Damage to increase them? *ALC.* None in the World. But I must needs say, I cannot reconcile the received Notions of a God and Providence

DIAL.

III.

**DIAL.** vidence to my Understanding, and my Nature abhors the Baseness of conniving at a Falshood. **EUPH.** Shall we therefore appeal to Truth, and examine the Reasons by which you are withheld from believing these Points? **ALC.** With all my Heart, but enough for the present. We will make this the Subject of our next Conference.

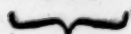





## The FOURTH DIALOGUE.

- I. *Prejudices concerning a Deity.* II. *Rules laid down by Alciphron to be observed in proving a God.* III. *What Sort of Proof he expects.* IV. *Whence we collect the being of other Thinking Individuals.* V. *The same Method à fortiori proves the Being of God.* VI. *Alciphron's second Thoughts on this Point.* VII. *God speaks to Men.* VIII. *How Distance is perceived by Sight.* IX. *The proper Objects of Sight at no Distance.* X. *Lights, Shades and Colours variously combined form a Language.* XI. *The Signification of this Language learned by Experience.* XII. *God explaineth himself to the Eyes of Men by the arbitrary Use of sensible Signs.* XIII. *The Prejudice and two-fold Aspect of a Minute Philosopher.* XIV. *God present to Mankind, informs, admonishes, and directs them in a sensible Manner.* XV. *Admirable Nature and Use of this visual Language.* XVI. *Minute Philosophers content to admit a God in certain Senses.* XVII. *Opinion of some who hold that Knowledge and Wisdom*



DIAL.  
IV.

*dom are not properly in God. XVIII. Dangerous Tendency of this Notion. XIX. Its Original. XX. The Sense of Schoolmen upon it. XXI. Scholastic Use of the Terms Analogy and Analogical explained: Analogical Perfections of God misunderstood. XXII. God intelligent, wise, and good in the proper Sense of the Words. XXIII. Objection from Moral Evil considered. XXIV. Men argue from their own Defects against a Deity. XXV. Religious Worship reasonable and expedient.*

- I.  ARLY the next Morning, as I looked out of my Window, I saw *Alciphron* walking in the Garden with all the Signs of a Man in deep Thought. Upon which I went down to him. *Alciphron*, said I, this early and profound Meditation puts me in no small Fright. How so! Because I shou'd be sorry to be convinced there was no God. The Thought of Anarchy in Nature is to me more shocking than in Civil Life; inasmuch as Natural Concerns are more important than Civil and the Basis of all others. I grant, replied *Alciphron*, that some Inconvenience may possibly follow from disproving a God, but as to what you say of Fright and Shocking, all that is nothing

thing but Prejudice, meer Prejudice. Men frame an Idea or Chimæra in their own Minds, and then fall down and worship it. Notions govern Mankind, but of all Notions, that of God's governing the World hath taken the deepest Root and spread the farthest: It is therefore in Philosophy an heroical Atchievement to dispossess this imaginary Monarch of his Government, and banish all those Fears and Spectres which the Light of Reason alone can dispel;

*Non radii solis, non lucida tela diei  
Discutiunt, sed Naturæ species ratioque\*.*

My Part, said I, shall be to stand by, as I have hitherto done, and take Notes of all that passeth during this memorable Event, while a Minute Philosopher not six Foot high attempts to dethrone the Monarch of the Universe. Alas! replied *Alciphron*, Arguments are not to be measured by Feet and Inches. One Man may see more than a Million; and a short Argument, managed by a Free-thinker, may be sufficient to overthrow the most Gigantic Chimæra. As we were engaged in this Discourse, *Crito* and *Euphranor* joined us. I find you have been beforehand with us to day, said *Crito* to *Alciphron*, and taken the Advantage of Solitude and early Hours, while *Euphranor* and I were asleep in our Beds.

\* *Lucretius.*

We

DIAL. We may therefore expect to see Atheism  
 IV. placed in the best Light, and supported  
 by the strongest Arguments.

II. *ALC.* The Being of a God is a Subject upon which there has been a world of Common-place, which it is needless to repeat. Give me leave therefore to lay down certain Rules and Limitations, in order to shorten our present Conference. For as the End of debating is to persuade, all those Things which are foreign to this End shou'd be left out of our Debate. First then, let me tell you, I am not to be persuaded by Metaphysical Arguments; such for Instance as are drawn from the Idea of an All-perfect Being, or the Absurdity of an infinite Progression of Causes. This sort of Arguments I have always found dry and jejune; and, as they are not suited to my way of Thinking, they may perhaps puzzle, but never will convince me. Secondly, I am not to be persuaded by the Authority either of past or present Ages, of Mankind in general, or of particular wise Men, all which passeth for little or nothing with a Man of sound Argument and free Thought. Thirdly, All Proofs drawn from Utility or Convenience are foreign to the purpose. They may prove indeed the Usefulness of the  
 Notion,

DIAL.

IV.

Notion, but not the Existence of the Thing. Whatever Legislators or Statesmen may think, Truth and Convenience are very different Things to the rigorous Eyes of a Philosopher. And now, that I may not seem partial, I will limit myself also not to object, in the first place, from any thing that may seem irregular or unaccountable in the Works of Nature, against a Cause of infinite Power and Wisdom; because I already know the Answer you wou'd make, to wit, That no one can judge of the Symmetry and Use of the Parts of an infinite Machine, which are all relative to each other, and to the whole, without being able to comprehend the intire Machine or the whole Universe. And in the second place, I shall engage myself not to object against the Justice and Providence of a Supreme Being, from the Evil that befalls good Men, and the Prosperity which is often the Portion of wicked Men in this Life, because I know that, instead of admitting this to be an Objection against a Deity, you wou'd make it an Argument for a future State; in which there shall be such a Retribution of Rewards and Punishments, as may vindicate the Divine Attributes, and set all Things right in the End. Now these Answers, though they shou'd be admitted for

P

good

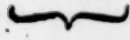


DIAL. good ones are in truth no Proofs of the  
 IV. Being of God, but only Solutions of cer-  
 { tain Difficulties which might be objected,  
 supposing it already proved by proper Ar-  
 guments. Thus much I thought fit to  
 premise, in order to save Time and Trouble  
 both to you and myself. *CRI.* I think  
 that, as the proper End of our Conference  
 ought to be supposed the Discovery and  
 Defence of Truth, so Truth may be justi-  
 fied, not only by persuading its Adversar-  
 ies, but, where that cannot be done, by  
 shewing them to be unreasonable. Argu-  
 ments, therefore, which carry Light, have  
 their Effect, even against an Opponent  
 who shuts his Eyes, because they shew  
 him to be obstinate and prejudiced. Be-  
 sides, this Distinction between Arguments  
 that puzzle and that convince, is least of  
 all observed by Minute Philosophers, and  
 need not therefore be observed by others  
 in their favour. But, perhaps, *Euphranor*  
 may be willing to encounter you on your  
 own Terms, in which Case I have nothing  
 farther to say.

III. *EUPH.* *Alciphron* acts like a skil-  
 ful General, who is bent upon gaining the  
 Advantage of the Ground, and alluring  
 the Enemy out of their Trenches. We,  
 who believe a God, are intrenched within  
 Tra-

Tradition, Custom, Authority, and Law. DIAL.  
And nevertheless, instead of attempting to force us, he proposes that we shou'd voluntarily abandon these Intrenchments, and make the Attack, when we may act on the defensive with much Security and Ease, leaving him the Trouble to dispossess us of what we need not resign. Those Reasons (continued he, addressing himself to *Alciphron*) which you have mustered up in this Morning's Meditation, if they do not weaken, must establish our Belief of a God; for the utmost is to be expected from so great a Master in his Profession, when he sets his Strength to a Point.

IV. *ALC.* I hold the confused Notion of a Deity, or some invisible Power, to be of all Prejudices the most unconquerable. When half a dozen ingenious Men are got together over a Glass of Wine, by a chearful Fire, in a Room well lighted, we banish with ease all the Spectres of Fancy or Education, and are very clear in our Decisions. But, as I was taking a solitary Walk before it was broad Day-light in yonder Grove, methought the Point was not quite so clear; nor cou'd I readily recollect the Force of those Arguments, which used to appear so conclusive at other Times. I had I know not what Awe upon my Mind, and seemed haunted by a sort of Panic,

DIAL. which I cannot otherwise account for,  
 IV.  than by supposing it the Effect of Prejudice: For you must know, that I, like the rest of the World, was once upon a Time catechised and tutored into the Belief of a God or Spirit. There is no surer Mark of Prejudice, than the believing a Thing without Reason. What Necessity then can there be that I shou'd set myself the difficult Task of proving a Negative, when it is sufficient to observe that there is no Proof of the Affirmative, and that the admitting it without Proof is unreasonable? Prove therefore your Opinion, or, if you cannot, you may indeed remain in possession of it, but you will only be possessed of a Prejudice. EUPH. O *Alciphron*, to content you we must prove, it seems, and we must prove upon your own Terms. But, in the first place, let us see what sort of Proof you expect. ALC. Perhaps I may not expect it, but I will tell you what sort of Proof I wou'd have: And that is in short, such Proof as every Man of Sense requires of a Matter of Fact, or the Existence of any other particular Thing. For Instance, shou'd a Man ask why I believe there is a King of *Great Britain*? I might answer because I had seen him; Or a King of *Spain*? because I had seen those who saw him. But

DIAL.  
IV.

as for this King of Kings, I neither saw him myself, nor any one else that ever did see him. Surely if there be such a Thing as God, it is very strange, that he shou'd leave himself without a Witness; that Men shou'd still dispute his Being; and that there shou'd be no one evident, sensible, plain Proof of it without recourse to Philosophy or Metaphysics. A Matter of Fact is not to be proved by Notions, but by Facts. This is clear and full to the Point. You see what I wou'd be at. Upon these Principles I defy Superstition. *EUPH.* You believe then as far as you can see. *ALC.* That is my Rule of Faith. *EUPH.* How! will you not believe the Existence of Things which you hear, unless you also see them? *ALC.* I will not say so neither. When I insisted on seeing I wou'd be understood to mean perceiving in general: Outward Objects make very different Impressions upon the animal Spirits, all which are comprised under the common Name of Sense. And whatever we can perceive by any Sense we may be sure of.

IV. *EUPH.* What! do you believe then there are such Things as animal Spirits? *ALC.* Doubtless. *EUPH.* By what Sense do you perceive them? *ALC.*



DIAL. I do not perceive them immediately by any

IV. of my Senses. I am nevertheless persuaded  
~~~~~ of their Existence, because I can collect it

from their Effects and Operations. They are the Messengers, which running to and fro in the Nerves, preserve a Communication between the Soul and outward Objects. *EUPH.* You admit then the Being of a Soul. *ALC.* Provided I do not admit an immaterial Substance, I see no Inconvenience in admitting there may be such a Thing as a Soul. And this may be no more than a thin fine Texture of subtile Parts or Spirits residing in the Brain.

*EUPH.* I do not ask about its Nature. I only ask whether you admit that there is a Principle of Thought and Action, and whether it be perceivable by Sense. *ALC.* I grant that there is such a Principle, and that it is not the Object of Sense itself, but inferred from Appearances which are perceived by Sense. *EUPH.* If I understand you rightly, from animal Functions and Motions you infer the Existence of animal Spirits, and from reasonable Acts you infer the Existence of a reasonable Soul. Is it not so? *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.*

It shou'd seem, therefore, that the Being of Things imperceptible to Sense may be collected from Effects and Signs, or sensible Tokens. *ALC.* It may. *EUPH.*

Tell

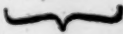
Tell me, *Alciphron*, is not the Soul that DIAL.  
which makes the principal Distinction be- IV.  
tween a real Person and a Shadow, a living  
Man and a Carcase? *ALC.* I grant it is.

*EUPH.* I cannot, therefore, know that  
you for Instance are a distinct thinking In-  
dividual, or a living real Man, by surer  
or other Signs than those from which it  
can be inferred that you have a Soul.

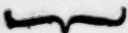
*ALC.* You cannot. *EUPH.* Pray tell  
me, are not all acts immediately and pro-  
perly perceived by Sense reducible to Mo-  
tion? *ALC.* They are. *EUPH.* From  
Motions therefore you infer a Mover or  
Cause: and from reasonable Motions (or  
such as appear calculated for a reasonable  
End) a rational Cause, Soul, or Spirit.  
*ALC.* Even so.

V. *EUPH.* The Soul of Man actuates  
but a small Body, an insignificant Parti-  
cle, in respect of the great Masses of Na-  
ture, the Elements, and heavenly Bodies,  
and System of the World. And the Wis-  
dom that appears in those Motions, which  
are the Effect of Humane Reason, is in-  
comparably less than that which disco-  
vers it self, in the structure and use of  
organized natural Bodies, Animal or Ve-  
getable. A Man with his Hand can make  
no Machine so admirable as the Hand it

DIAL. self: Nor can any of those Motions, by  
 IV. which we trace out Humane Reason, ap-  
 ~~~~~ proach the skill and contrivance of those  
 wonderful Motions of the Heart and  
 Brain and other vital parts, which do not  
 depend on the Will of Man. *ALC.* All  
 this is true. *EUPH.* Doth it not fol-  
 low then that from natural Motions, in-  
 dependent of Man's Will, may be in-  
 ferred both Power and Wisdom incompa-  
 rably greater than that of the Humane  
 Soul? *ALC.* It shou'd seem so. *EUPH.*  
 Further, is there not in natural Produc-  
 tions and Effects a visible Unity of coun-  
 sel and design? Are not the Rules fixed  
 and immoveable? Do not the same Laws  
 of Motion obtain throughout? The same  
 in *China* and here, the same two thou-  
 sand years ago and at this day? *ALC.*  
 All this I do not deny. *EUPH.* Is  
 there not also a Connexion or Relation be-  
 tween Animals and Vegetables, between  
 both and the Elements, between the Ele-  
 ments and Heavenly Bodies; so that from  
 their mutual Respects, Influences, Subor-  
 dinations, and Uses, they may be collected  
 to be parts of one whole, conspiring to one  
 and the same end, and fulfilling the same  
 design? *ALC.* Supposing all this to be  
 true. *EUPH.* Will it not then follow,  
 that this vastly great or infinite Power  
 and

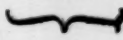
and Wisdom must be supposed in one DIAL.  
 and the same Agent, Spirit, or Mind, and IV.  
 that we have, at least, as clear, full and   
 immediate Certainty of the being of this  
 infinitely wise and powerful Spirit, as of  
 any one Humane Soul whatsoever besides  
 our own? *ALC.* Let me consider; I sus-  
 pect we proceed too hastily. What! Do  
 you pretend you can have the same As-  
 surance of the Being of God, that you  
 can have of mine whom you actually see  
 stand before you and talk to you?  
*EUPH.* The very same, if not greater.  
*ALC.* How do you make this appear?  
*EUPH.* By the person *Alciphron* is  
 meant an individual thinking thing, and  
 not the Hair, Skin or visible Surface, or  
 any part of the outward Form, Colour,  
 or Shape of *Alciphron*. *ALC.* This I  
 grant. *EUPH.* And in granting this,  
 you grant that in a strict Sense, I do not  
 see *Alciphron*, i. e. that individual think-  
 ing thing, but only such visible signs and  
 tokens, as suggest and infer the Being of  
 that invisible thinking Principle or Soul.  
 Even so, in the self same manner it seems  
 to me, that though I cannot with Eyes  
 of Flesh behold the Invisible God; yet I  
 do in the strictest Sense behold and per-  
 ceive by all my Senses such Signs and  
 Tokens, such Effects and Operations, as  
 suggest,

DIAL. suggest, indicate, and demonstrate an invi-

IV.  sible God, as certainly and with the same Evidence, at least, as any other Signs, perceived by Sense, do suggest to me the Existence of your Soul, Spirit, or thinking Principle; which I am convinced of only by a few Signs or Effects, and the Motions of one small organized Body: Whereas I do, at all times and in all places, perceive sensible Signs, which evince the Being of God. The point, therefore, doubted or denied by you at the beginning now seems manifestly to follow from the Premises. Throughout this whole Inquiry, have we not considered every step with care, and made not the least advance without clear Evidence? You and I examined and assented singly to each foregoing Proposition: What shall we do then with the Conclusion? For my part, if you do not help me out, I find my self under an absolute necessity of admitting it for true. You must therefore be content, henceforward to bear the blame, if I live and die in the Belief of a God.

VI. *ALC.* It must be confessed, I do not readily find an answer. There seems to be some Foundation for what you say. But on the other hand, if the point was so clear as you pretend, I cannot conceive  
how



how so many sagacious Men of our Sect DIAL.  
shou'd be so much in the dark, as not to IV.  
know or believe one Syllable of it. 

*EUPH.* O *Alciphron*, it is not our present business to account for the Oversight, or vindicate the Honour of those great Men the Free-thinkers, when their very Existence is in danger of being called in question. *ALC.* How so? *EUPH.* Be pleased to recollect the Concessions you have made, and then shew me, if the Arguments for a Deity be not conclusive, by what better Argument you can prove the Existence of that thinking Thing, which in strictness constitutes the Free-thinker. As soon as *Euphranor* had uttered these Words, *Alciphron* stopt short and stood in a posture of Meditation, while the rest of us continued our walk and took two or three turns, after which he joined us again with a smiling Countenance, like one who had made some Discovery. I have found, said he, what may clear up the point in dispute, and give *Euphranor* intire satisfaction; I wou'd say an Argument which will prove the Existence of a Free-thinker, the like whereof cannot be applied to prove the Existence of a God. You must know then, that your Notion of our perceiving the Existence of God, as certainly and im-

DIAL. immediately as we do that of a Humane

IV. Person, I cou'd by no means digest, though I must own it puzzled me, till I had considered the matter. At first methought, a particular Structure, Shape, or Motion was the most certain Proof of a thinking, reasonable Soul. But a little attention satisfied me, that these things have no necessary Connexion with Reason, Knowledge, and Wisdom. And that allowing them to be certain Proofs of a living Soul, they cannot be so of a thinking and reasonable one. Upon second Thoughts, therefore, and a minute Examination of this point, I have found that nothing so much convinces me of the Existence of another Person as his speaking to me. It is my hearing you talk that, in strict and philosophical Truth, is to me the best Argument for your Being. And this is a peculiar Argument inapplicable to your purpose: for you will not, I suppose, pretend that God speaks to Man in the same clear and sensible manner, as one Man doth to another.

VII. *EUPH.* How! is then the Impression of Sound so much more evident than that of other Senses? Or, if it be, is the voice of Man louder than that of Thunder?

Thunder? *ALC.* Alas! You mistake the point. What I mean is not the Sound of Speech meerly as such, but the arbitrary use of sensible Signs, which have no Similitude or necessary Connexion with the things signified, so as by the apposite Management of them, to suggest and exhibit to my mind an endless variety of things, differing in nature, time and place, thereby informing me, entertaining me, and directing me how to act, not only with regard to things near and present, but also, with regard to things distant and future. No matter, whether these Signs are pronounced or written, whether they enter by the Eye or the Ear: they have the same use, and are equally Proofs of an intelligent, thinking, designing Cause. *EUPH.* But what if it shou'd appear that God really speaks to Man; wou'd this content you? *ALC.* I am for admitting no inward Speech, no holy Instincts, or Suggestions of Light or Spirit. All that, you must know, passeth with Men of Sense for nothing. If you do not make it plain to me, that God speaks to Men by outward sensible Signs, of such sort and in such manner, as I have defined, you do nothing. *EUPH.* But if it shall appear plainly, that God speaks to Men, by the intervention and use of arbitrary, outward,

DIAL.

IV.

DIAL. outward, sensible Signs, having no Re-  
 IV. semblance or necessary Connexion with  
 { the things they stand for and suggest: if  
 it shall appear, that by innumerable Com-  
 binations of these Signs, an endless  
 variety of things is discovered and made  
 known to us; and that we are thereby  
 instructed or informed in their different  
 Natures; that we are taught and admo-  
 nished what to shun, and what to pur-  
 sue; and are directed how to regulate our  
 Motions, and how to act with respect to  
 things distant from us, as well in time as  
 place; will this content you? *ALC.* It  
 is the very thing I wou'd have you make  
 out; for therein consists the force and use  
 and nature of Language.

VIII. *EUPH.* Look, *Alciphron*, do you  
 not see the Castle upon yonder Hill?  
*ALC.* I do. *EUPH.* Is it not at a  
 great Distance from you? *ALC.* It is.  
*EUPH.* Tell me, *Alciphron*, is not Dis-  
 tance a Line turned End-wise to the Eye?  
*ALC.* Doubtless. *EUPH.* And can a  
 Line, in that Situation, project more than  
 one single Point on the Bottom of the Eye?  
*ALC.* It cannot. *EUPH.* Therefore the  
 Appearance of a long and of a short Dis-  
 tance is of the same Magnitude, or rather  
 of no Magnitude at all, being in all Cases  
 one

one single Point. *ALC.* It seems so. DIAL.  
*EUPH.* Shou'd it not follow from hence, IV.  
that Distance is not immediately perceived by the Eye? *ALC.* It shou'd. *EUPH.*  
Must it not then be perceived by the mediation of some other Thing? *ALC.* It must. *EUPH.* To discover what this is, let us examine what Alteration there may be in the Appearance of the same Object, placed at different Distances from the Eye. Now I find by Experience that, when an Object is removed still farther and farther off in a direct Line from the Eye, its visible Appearance still grows lesser and fainter, and this Change of Appearance, being proportional and universal, seems to me to be that by which we apprehend the various Degrees of Distance. *ALC.* I have nothing to object to this. *EUPH.* But Littleness or Faintness, in their own Nature, seem to have no necessary Connexion with greater Length of Distance. *ALC.* I admit this to be true. *EUPH.* Will it not follow then, that they cou'd never suggest it but from Experience? *ALC.* It will. *EUPH.* That is to say, we perceive Distance, not immediately, but by mediation of a Sign, which hath no Likeness to it, or necessary Connexion with it, but only suggests it from repeated Experience as Words do Things. *ALC.*  
Hold,



DIAL. Hold, *Euphranor* ; now I think of it, the

IV. Writers in Optics tell us of an Angle made  
 by the two Optic Axes, where they meet  
 in the visible Point or Object ; which  
 Angle the obtuser it is the nearer it shews  
 the Object to be, and by how much the  
 acuter by so much the farther off ; and  
 this by a necessary demonstrable Con-  
 nexion. *EUPH.* The Mind then finds  
 out the Distance of Things by Geometry.  
*ALC.* It doth. *EUPH.* Shou'd it not  
 follow therefore that no body cou'd see  
 but those who had learned Geometry,  
 and knew something of Lines and Angles ?  
*ALC.* There is a sort of natural Geome-  
 try which is got without Learning.  
*EUPH.* Pray inform me, *Alciphron*, in  
 order to frame a Proof of any kind, or  
 deduce one Point from another, is it not  
 necessary, that I perceive the Connexion  
 of the Terms in the Premises, and the  
 Connexion of the Premises with the Con-  
 clusion ; and, in general, to know one  
 Thing by means of another, must I not  
 first know that other Thing ? when I per-  
 ceive your Meaning by your Words, must I  
 not first perceive the Words themselves ?  
 and must I not know the Premises before I  
 infer the Conclusion ? *ALC.* All this is  
 true. *EUPH.* Whoever therefore col-  
 lects a nearer Distance from a wider Angle,  
 or

or a farther Distance from an acuter Angle, DIAL.  
must first perceive the Angles themselves. IV.

And he who doth not perceive those Angles, can infer nothing from them. Is it so or not? *ALC.* It is as you say. *EUPH.*

Ask now the first Man you meet, whether he perceives or knows any thing of those Optic Angles? Or whether he ever thinks about them, or makes any Inferences from them, either by natural or artificial Geometry? What Answer do you think he wou'd make?

*ALC.* To speak the Truth, I believe his Answer wou'd be, that he knew nothing of those Matters. *EUPH.*

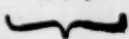
It cannot therefore be, that Men judge of Distance by Angles: Nor consequently can there be any Force in the Argument you drew from thence, to prove that Distance is perceived by means of something which hath a necessary Connexion with it.

*ALC.* I agree with you.

IX. *EUPH.* To me it seems, that a Man may know whether he perceives a Thing or no; and if he perceives it, whether it be immediately or mediately: And if mediately, whether by means of something like or unlike, necessarily or arbitrarily connected with it. *ALC.* It seems so. *EUPH.* And is it not certain, that Distance is perceived only by Experience, if it be neither perceived im-

Q mediately

DIAL. mediately by itself, nor by means of any  
 IV. Image, nor of any Lines and Angles, which  
 are like it, or have a necessary Connexion  
 with it? *ALC.* It is. *EUPH.* Doth  
 it not seem to follow from what hath been  
 said and allowed by you ; that before all  
 Experience a Man wou'd not imagine, the  
 Things he saw were at any Distance from  
 him? *ALC.* How ! let me see. *EUPH.*  
 The Littleness or Faintness of Appear-  
 ance, or any other Idea or Sensation, not  
 necessarily connected with, or resembling  
 Distance, can no more suggest different  
 Degrees of Distance, or any Distance at  
 all, to the Mind, which hath not expe-  
 rienced a Connexion of the Things signi-  
 fying and signified, than Words can sug-  
 gest Notions before a Man hath learned the  
 Language. *ALC.* I allow this to be true.  
*EUPH.* Will it not thence follow, that a  
 Man born blind, and made to see, wou'd,  
 upon first receiving his Sight, take the  
 Things he saw, not to be at any Distance  
 from him, but in his Eye, or rather in his  
 Mind? *ALC.* I must own it seems so;  
 and yet, on the other hand, I can hardly  
 persuade myself, that, if I were in such a  
 State, I shou'd think those Objects, which  
 I now see at so great Distance, to be at no  
 Distance at all. *EUPH.* It seems then,  
 that you now think the Objects of Sight  
 are

are at a Distance from you. *ALC.* Doubt-*DIAL.*  
less I do. Can any one question but yon- *IV.*  
der Castle is at a great Distance? *EUPH.* 

Tell me, *Alciphron*, can you discern the  
Doors, Windows, and Battlements of that  
same Castle? *ALC.* I cannot. At this  
Distance it seems only a small round Tower.

*EUPH.* But I, who have been at it, know  
that it is no small round Tower, but a  
large square Building with Battlements  
and Turrets, which it seems you do not  
see. *ALC.* What will you infer from  
thence? *EUPH.* I wou'd infer, that  
the very Object, which you strictly and  
properly perceive by Sight, is not that  
Thing which is several Miles distant.

*ALC.* Why so? *EUPH.* Because a  
little round Object is one thing, and a great  
square Object is another. Is it not? *ALC.*

I cannot deny it. *EUPH.* Tell me, is not  
the visible Appearance alone the proper  
Object of Sight? *ALC.* It is. What

think you now (said *Euphranor* pointing  
towards the Heavens) of the visible Ap-  
pearance of yonder Planet? Is it not a  
round luminous Flat, no bigger than a  
Sixpence? *ALC.* What then? *EUPH.*

Tell me then, what you think of the Pla-  
net itself. Do you not conceive it to be  
a vast Opaque Globe, with several un-  
equal Risings and Vallies? *ALC.* I do.

Q<sub>2</sub>

*EUPH.*

DIAL. *EUPH.* How can you therefore conclude,  
 IV. that the proper Object of your Sight exists  
 at a Distance? *ALC.* I confess I know  
 not. *EUPH.* For your farther Convic-  
 tion, do but consider that crimson Cloud.  
 Think you that if you were in the very  
 Place where it is, you wou'd perceive any  
 Thing like what you now see? *ALC.* By  
 no means. I shou'd perceive only a dark  
 Mist. *EUPH.* Is it not plain, therefore,  
 that neither the Castle, the Planet, nor the  
 Cloud, which you see here, are those real  
 ones which you suppose exist at a Dis-  
 tance?

X. *ALC.* What am I to think then?  
 Do we see any thing at all, or is it altoge-  
 ther Fancy and Illusion? *EUPH.* Upon  
 the whole, it seems the proper Objects of  
 Sight are Light and Colours, with their  
 several Shades and Degrees, all which,  
 being infinitely diversified and combined,  
 do form a Language wonderfully adapted  
 to suggest and exhibit to us the Distances,  
 Figures, Situations, Dimensions, and va-  
 rious Qualities of tangible Objects; not  
 by Similitude, nor yet by Inference of  
 necessary Connexion, but by the arbitrary  
 Imposition of Providence, just as Words  
 suggest the Things signified by them.  
*ALC.* How! Do we not, strictly speak-  
 ing,



ing, perceive by Sight such Things as DIAL.  
 Trees, Houses, Men, Rivers, and the IV.  
 like? *EUPH.* We do, indeed, perceive {  
 or apprehend those Things by the Faculty  
 of Sight. But will it follow from thence,  
 that they are the proper and immediate  
 Objects of Sight, any more than that all  
 those Things are the proper and immedi-  
 ate Objects of Hearing, which are signified  
 by the Help of Words or Sounds? *ALC.*  
 You wou'd have us think then, that Light,  
 Shades, and Colours, variously combined,  
 answer to the several Articulations of Sound  
 in Language, and that, by means thereof,  
 all sorts of Objects are suggested to the  
 Mind through the Eye, in the same man-  
 ner as they are suggested by Words or  
 Sounds through the Ear; that is; neither  
 from necessary Deduction to the Judgment,  
 nor from Similitude to the Fancy, but  
 purely and solely from Experience, Cus-  
 tom, and Habit. *EUPH.* I wou'd not  
 have you think any thing, more than the  
 Nature of Things obligeth you to think,  
 nor submit in the least to my Judgment,  
 but only to the Force of Truth, which is  
 an Imposition that I suppose the freest  
 Thinkers will not pretend to be exempt  
 from. *ALC.* You have led me, it seems,  
 Step by Step, till I am got I know not  
 where. But I shall try to get out again,

DIAL. if not by the Way I came, yet by some  
 IV. other of my own finding. Here *Alci-*  
*phron* having made a short Pause, proceeded  
 as follows.

XI. Answer me, *Euphranor*, shou'd it not follow from these Principles, that a Man born blind, and made to see, wou'd at first Sight, not only not perceive their Distance, but also not so much as know the very Things themselves which he saw, for Instance, Men or Trees? which surely to suppose must be absurd. *EUPH.* I grant, in consequence of those Principles, which both you and I have admitted, that such a one wou'd never think of Men, Trees, or any other Objects that he had been accustomed to perceive by Touch, upon having his Mind filled with new Sensations of Light and Colours, whose various Combinations he doth not yet understand, or know the Meaning of, no more than a *Chinese*, upon first hearing the Words *Man* and *Tree*, wou'd think of the Things signified by them. In both Cases, there must be Time and Experience, by repeated Acts, to acquire a Habit of knowing the Connexion between the Signs and Things signified, that is to say, of understanding the Language, whether of the Eyes or of the Ears. And I conceive no Absurdity in all this.  
*ALC.*

*ALC.* I see therefore, in strict Philo-  
 sophical Truth, that Rock only in the same  
 Sense that I may be said to hear it, when  
 the Word *Rock* is pronounced. *EUPH.*

In the very same. *ALC.* How comes  
 it to pass then, that every one shall  
 say he sees, for Instance, a Rock or a  
 House, when those Things are before his  
 Eyes; but no body will say he hears a Rock  
 or a House, but only the words or sounds  
 themselves, by which those things are said  
 to be signified or suggested, but not  
 heard? Besides, if Vision be only a Lan-  
 guage speaking to the Eyes, it may be  
 asked; When did Men learn this Lan-  
 guage? To acquire the knowledge of so  
 many Signs, as go to the making up a  
 Language, is a work of some difficulty.  
 But will any Man say he hath spent time,  
 or been at pains, to learn this Language  
 of Vision? *EUPH.* No wonder, we  
 cannot assign a time beyond our remotest  
 Memory. If we have been all practising  
 this Language, ever since our first en-  
 trance into the World: If the Author of  
 Nature constantly speaks to the Eyes of all  
 Mankind, even in their earliest Infancy,  
 whenever the Eyes are open in the Light,  
 whether alone or in Company: It doth  
 not seem to me at all strange, that Men  
 shou'd not be aware they had ever learn-

DIAL. ed a Language, begun so early, and practised so constantly, as this of Vision. And, IV. if we also consider that it is the same throughout the whole World, and not, like other Languages, differing in different places, it will not seem unaccountable, that Men shou'd mistake the Connexion between the proper Objects of Sight and the things signified by them, to be founded in necessary Relation, or Likeness, or that they shou'd even take them for the same things. Hence it seems easy to conceive, why Men, who do not think, shou'd confound in this Language of Vision the Signs with the things signified, otherwise than they are wont to do, in the various particular Languages formed by the several Nations of Men.

XII. It may be also worth while to observe, that Signs being little considered in themselves, or for their own sake, but only in their relative Capacity, and for the sake of those things whereof they are Signs, it comes to pass, that the mind often overlooks them, so as to carry its Attention immediately on to the things signified. Thus, for example, in reading we run over the Characters with the slightest regard, and pass on to the meaning. Hence it is frequent for Men to say, they

they see Words, and Notions, and Things in reading of a Book ; whereas in strictness, they see only the Characters, which suggest Words, Notions, and Things. And by parity of Reason, may we not suppose, that Men, not resting in, but overlooking, the immediate and proper Objects of Sight, as in their own Nature of small moment, carry their Attention onward to the very things signified, and talk as if they saw the secondary Objects? which, in truth and strictness, are not seen but only suggested, and apprehended by means of the proper Objects of Sight, which alone are seen. *ALC.* To speak my mind freely, this Dissertation grows tedious, and runs into points too dry and minute for a Gentleman's Attention. I thought, said *Crito*, we had been told, the Minute Philosophers loved to consider things closely and minutely. *ALC.* That is true, but in so polite an Age who wou'd be a meer Philosopher? There is a certain scholastic Accuracy which ill suits the freedom and ease of a well-bred Man. But, to cut short this Chicane, I propound it fairly to your own Conscience, whether you really think, that God himself speaks every day and in every place to the Eyes of all Men? *EUPH.* That is really and in truth my Opinion ; and it shou'd be yours

DIAL.  
IV.



DIAL. yours too, if you are consistent with your  
 IV. self, and abide by your own Definition of  
 Language. Since you cannot deny, that the  
 Great Mover and Author of Nature constantly explaineth himself to the Eyes of Men, by the sensible intervention of arbitrary Signs, which have no Similitude or Connexion with the things signified; so as by compounding and disposing them, to suggest and exhibit an endless variety of Objects differing in nature, time, and place, thereby informing and directing Men, how to act with respect to things distant and future, as well as near and present. In consequence, I say, of your own Sentiments and Concessions, you have as much reason to think, the universal Agent or God speaks to your Eyes, as you can have for thinking any particular Person speaks to your Ears. *ALC.* I cannot help thinking, that some Fallacy runs throughout this whole Ratiocination, though perhaps I may not readily point it out. Hold! let me see. In Language the Signs are arbitrary, are they not? *EUPH.* They are. *ALC.* And consequently, they do not always suggest real matters of Fact. Whereas this natural Language, as you call it, or these visible Signs do always suggest things, in the same uniform way, and have the same constant regular Connexion

nexion with matters of Fact: whence it shou'd seem, the Connexion was necessary, and therefore, according to the Definition premised, it can be no Language. How do you solve this Objection? *EUPH.* You may solve it your self, by the help of a Picture or Looking-glass. *ALC.* You are in the right. I see there is nothing in it. I know not what else to say to this Opinion, more than that it is so odd and contrary to my way of thinking, that I shall never assent to it.

DIAL.  
IV.

XIII. *EUPH.* Be pleas'd to recollect your own Lectures upon Prejudice, and apply them in the present case. Perhaps they may help you to follow where Reason leads, and to suspect Notions which are strongly riveted, without having been ever examined. *ALC.* I disdain the suspicion of Prejudice. And I do not speak only for my self. I know a Club of most ingenious Men, the freest from Prejudice of any Men alive, who abhor the Notion of a God, and I doubt not wou'd be very able to untie this knot. Upon which Words of *Alciphron*, I, who had acted the part of an indifferent stander-by, observed to him, that it misbecame his Character and repeated Professions, to own an Attachment to the Judgment, or build upon

DIAL. upon the presumed Abilities of other Men  
 IV. how ingenious soever : and that this proceeding might encourage his Adversaries to have recourse to Authority, in which perhaps they wou'd find their account more than he. Oh! said *Crito*, I have often observed the Conduct of Minute Philosophers. When one of them has got a ring of Disciples round him, his method is to exclaim against Prejudice, and recommend thinking and reasoning, giving to understand that himself is a Man of deep Researches and close Argument, one who examines impartially and concludes warily. The same Man in other Company, if he chance to be pressed with Reason, shall laugh at Logic and assume the lazy supine Airs of a fine Gentleman, a Wit, a Railleur, to avoid the dryness of a regular and exact Inquiry. This double Face of the Minute Philosopher is of no small use to propagate and maintain his Notions. Though to me it seems a plain Case, that if a fine Gentleman will shake off Authority, and appeal from Religion to Reason, unto Reason he must go : And if he cannot go without leading strings, surely he had better be led by the Authority of the Public, than by that of any knot of Minute Philosophers. *ALC.*  
 Gentlemen, this Discourse is very irksome  
 and

and needless. For my part, I am a friend DIAL.  
to Inquiry. I am willing Reason shou'd IV.  
have its full and free Scope. I build on  
no Man's Authority. For my part I have  
no interest in denying a God. Any Man  
may believe or not believe a God as he  
pleases for me. But after all, *Euphranor*  
must allow me to stare a little at his  
Conclusions. *EUPH.* The Conclusions  
are yours as much as mine, for you were  
led to them by your own Concessions.

XIV. You it seems stare to find, that  
God is not far from every one of us, and  
that in him we live and move and have  
our Being. You, who in the beginning of  
this Morning's Conferencce, thought it  
strange, that God shou'd leave himself  
without a witness, do now think it strange  
the witness shou'd be so full and clear.  
*ALC.* I must own I do. I was aware,  
indeed, of a certain Metaphysical Hypo-  
thesis, of our seeing all things in God by  
the union of the Humane Soul with the  
intelligible Substance of the Deity, which  
neither I nor any one else cou'd make  
sense of. But I never imagined it cou'd  
be pretended, that we saw God with our  
fleshly Eyes as plain as we see any Hu-  
mane Person whatsoever, and that he daily  
speaks to our Senses in a manifest and  
clear

DIAL. clear Dialect. *CRI.* This Language hath  
 IV. a necessary Connexion with Knowledge,  
 { Wisdom, and Goodness. It is equivalent  
 to a constant Creation, betokening an immediate act of Power and Providence. It cannot be accounted for by mechanical Principles, by Atoms, Attractions, or Effluvia. The instantaneous Production and Reproduction of so many Signs combined, dissolved, transposed, diversified, and adapted to such an endless variety of purposes, ever shifting with the occasions and suited to them, being utterly inexplicable and unaccountable by the Laws of Motion, by Chance, by Fate, or the like blind Principles, doth set forth and testify the immediate Operation of a Spirit or thinking Being; and not merely of a Spirit, which every Motion or Gravitation may possibly infer, but of one wise, good and provident Spirit, who directs and rules and governs the World. Some Philosophers, being convinced of the Wisdom and Power of the Creator, from the make and contrivance of organized Bodies and orderly System of the World, did nevertheless imagine, that he left this System with all its parts and contents well adjusted and put in motion, as an Artist leaves a Clock, to go thenceforward of it self for a certain Period. But this  
 visual

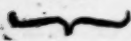


visual Language proves, not a Creator DIAL.  
 meerly, but a provident Governor ac- IV.  
 tually and intimately present and atten- {  
 tive to all our Interests and Motions;  
 who watches over our Conduct, and takes  
 care of our minutest Actions and Designs,  
 throughout the whole course of our lives,  
 informing, admonishing, and directing  
 incessantly, in a most evident and sensi-  
 ble manner. This is truly wonderful.  
*EUPH.* And is it not so, that Men  
 shou'd be encompassed by such a wonder,  
 without reflecting on it?

XV. Something there is of Divine and  
 Admirable in this Language, address'd to  
 our Eyes, that may well awaken the Mind,  
 and deserve its utmost Attention; it is  
 learned with so little pains, it expresseth  
 the Differences of Things so clearly and  
 aptly, it instructs with such Facility and  
 Dispatch, by one Glance of the Eye con-  
 veying a greater Variety of Advices, and a  
 more distinct Knowledge of Things, than  
 cou'd be got by a Discourse of several  
 Hours. And, while it informs, it amuses  
 and entertains the Mind with such singular  
 Pleasure and Delight. It is of such excel-  
 lent Use in giving a Stability and Perma-  
 nency to Humane Discourse, in recording  
 Sounds and bestowing Life on dead Lan-  
 guages,

DIAL. guages, enabling us to converse with Men

IV. of remote Ages and Countries. And it

 answers so apposite to the Uses and Necessities of Mankind, informing us more distinctly of those Objects, whose Nearness and Magnitude qualify them to be of greatest Detriment or Benefit to our Bodies, and less exactly, in Proportion as their Littleness or Distance make them of less Concern to us. *ALC.* And yet these strange Things affect Men but little. *EUPH.* But they are not strange, they are familiar, and that makes them be overlooked. Things which rarely happen strike; whereas Frequency lessens the Admiration of Things, though in themselves ever so admirable. Hence a common Man, who is not used to think and make Reflexions, wou'd probably be more convinced of the Being of a God, by one single Sentence heard once in his life from the Sky, than by all the Experience he has had of this visual Language, contrived with such exquisite skill, so constantly addressed to his Eyes, and so plainly declaring the Nearness, Wisdom, and Providence of him with whom we have to do. *ALC.* After all, I cannot satisfy my self, how Men shou'd be so little surpris'd or amazed about this visive Faculty, if it was really of a nature so surpris'ing and  
amazing.

amazing. *EUPH.* But let us suppose a Nation of Men blind from their Infancy, among whom a Stranger arrives, the only Man who can see in all the Country: Let us suppose this Stranger travelling with some of the Natives, and that one while he foretells to them, that, in case they walk straight forward, in half an Hour they shall meet Men or Cattle or come to a House; that if they turn to the right and proceed, they shall in a few Minutes be in danger of falling down a Precipice; that shaping their course to the left, they will in such a time arrive at a River, a Wood, or a Mountain. What think you? Must they not be infinitely surpris'd, that one, who had never been in their Country before, shou'd know it so much better than themselves? And wou'd not those Predictions seem to them as unaccountable and incredible, as Prophecy to a Minute Philosopher? *ALC.* I cannot deny it. *EUPH.* But it seems to require intense thought, to be able to unravel a Prejudice that has been so long forming, to get over the vulgar Error of Ideas common to both Senses, and so to distinguish between the Objects of Sight and Touch \*, which have grown (if I may so

\* See the annexed Treatise wherein this Point and the whole Theory of Vision are more fully explained,

DIAL. say) blended together in our Fancy, as to  
 IV. be able to suppose our selves exactly in  
 the State, that one of those Men wou'd  
 be in, if he were made to see. And yet  
 this I believe is possible, and might seem  
 worth the pains of a little thinking, especially to those Men whose proper Employment and Profession it is to think, and unravel Prejudices, and confute Mistakes. I frankly own I cannot find my way out of this Maze, and shou'd gladly be set right by those who see better than my self. CRI. The pursuing this Subject in their own Thoughts wou'd possibly open a new Scene, to those speculative Gentlemen of the Minute Philosophy. It puts me in mind of a passage in the Psalmist, where he represents God to be covered with Light as with a Garment, and wou'd methinks be no ill Comment on that ancient Notion of some Eastern Sages: That God had Light for his Body, and Truth for his Soul. This Conversation lasted till a Servant came to tell us the Tea was ready: Upon which we walked in, and found *Lyficles* at the Tea-table.

XVI. As soon as we sat down, I am glad, said *Alciphron*, that I have here found my Second, a fresh Man to maintain our common Cause, which, I doubt,  
*Lyficles*

*Lyficles* will think hath suffered by his absence. *LYS.* Why so? *ALC.* I have been drawn into some Concessions you won't like. *LYS.* Let me know what they are. *ALC.* Why, that there is such a thing as a God, and that his Existence is very certain. *LYS.* Bless me! How came you to entertain so wild a Notion? *ALC.* You know we profess to follow Reason wherever it leads. And in short I have been reasoned into it. *LYS.* Reasoned? You shou'd say amused with Words, bewildered with Sophistry. *EUPH.* Have you a mind to hear the same Reasoning that led *Alciphron* and me Step by Step, that we may examine whether it be Sophistry or no? *LYS.* As to that I am very easy. I guess all that can be said on that Head. It shall be my Business to help my Friend out, whatever Arguments drew him in. *EUPH.* Will you admit the Premises and deny the Conclusions? *LYS.* What if I admit the Conclusion? *EUPH.* How! will you grant there is a God? *LYS.* Perhaps I may. *EUPH.* Then we are agreed. *LYS.* Perhaps not. *EUPH.* O *Lyficles*, you are a subtle Adversary. I know not what you wou'd be at. *LYS.* You must know then, that at bottom the Being of a God is a Point in it self of small consequence,



DIAL. and a Man may make this Concession

IV. without yielding much. The great Point is what Sense the word God is to be taken in. The very *Epicureans* allowed the Being of Gods; but then they were indolent Gods, unconcerned with Humane Affairs. *Hobbes* allowed a corporeal God; and *Spinoza* held the Universe to be God. And yet no body doubts they were staunch Free-thinkers. I cou'd wish indeed the word God were quite omitted, because in most minds it is coupled with a sort of superstitious Aw, the very Root of all Religion. I shall not, nevertheless, be much disturbed though the name be retained, and the Being of God allowed in any Sense but in that of a Mind, which knows all things, and beholds Humane Actions, like some Judge or Magistrate with infinite Observation and Intelligence. The Belief of a God in this Sense fills a Man's Mind with Scruples, lays him under Constraints and imbitters his very Being: But in another Sense, it may be attended with no great ill Consequence. This I know was the Opinion of our great *Diagoras*, who told me he wou'd never have been at the pains, to find out a Demonstration that there was no God, if the received Notion of God had been the same with that of some Fathers and

Schoolmen.

Schoolmen. *EUPH.* Pray what was DIAL.  
IV.  
that?

XVII. *LYS.* You must know, *Diago-*  
*ras*, a Man of much reading and inquiry,  
had discovered that once upon a time, the  
most profound and speculative Divines  
finding it impossible to reconcile the At-  
tributes of God, taken in the common  
Sense, or in any known Sense, with Hu-  
mane Reason, and the Appearances of  
things, taught that the words Knowledge,  
Wisdom, Goodness, and such like, when  
spoken of the Deity, must be understood  
in a quite different Sense, from what they  
signify in the vulgar Acceptation, or from  
any thing that we can form a Notion of, or  
conceive. Hence, whatever Objections  
might be made against the Attributes of  
God they easily solved, by denying those  
Attributes belonged to God, in this or that  
or any known particular Sense or Notion;  
which was the same thing as to deny they  
belonged to him at all. And thus denying  
the Attributes of God they in effect de-  
ny'd his Being, though perhaps they were  
not aware of it. Suppose, for instance, a  
Man shou'd object, that future Contin-  
gencies were inconsistent with the Fore-  
knowledge of God, because it is repugnant  
that certain Knowledge shou'd be of an un-  
certain thing; it was a ready and an easy an-

DIAL. swerto say, that this may be true, with re-  
IV. spect to Knowledge taken in the common  
Sense, or in any Sense that we can possibly form any Notion of; but that there wou'd not appear the same Inconsistency, between the contingent Nature of Things and Divine Foreknowledge, taken to signify somewhat that we know nothing of, which in God supplies the place of what we understand by Knowledge; from which it differs not in Quantity or Degree of Perfection, but altogether, and in kind, as Light doth from Sound; and even more, since these agree in that they are both Sensations: whereas Knowledge in God hath no sort of Resemblance or Agreement with any Notion, that Man can frame of Knowledge. The like may be said of all the other Attributes, which indeed may by this means be equally reconciled with every thing or with nothing: But all Men who think must needs see, this is cutting knots and not untying them. For how are things reconciled with the Divine Attributes, when these Attributes themselves are in every intelligible Sense denied; and consequently the very Notion of God taken away, and nothing left but the Name, without any meaning annexed to it? In short, the Belief that there is an unknown Subject of Attributes

Attributes absolutely unknown is a very DIAL. innocent Doctrine; which the acute IV. *Diagoras* well saw, and was therefore wonderfully delighted with this System.

XVIII. For, said he, if this cou'd once make its way and obtain in the World, there wou'd be an end of all natural or rational Religion, which is the Basis both of the Jewish and the Christian: for he who comes to God, or enters himself in the Church of God, must first believe that there is a God in some intelligible Sense; and not only that there is something in general without any proper Notion, though never so inadequate, of any of its Qualities or Attributes; for this may be Fate, or Chaos, or Plastic Nature, or any thing else as well as God. Nor will it avail to say, there is something in this unknown Being analogous to Knowledge and Goodness; that is to say, which produceth those Effects, which we cou'd not conceive to be produced by Men in any Degree, without Knowledge and Goodness. For this is in Fact to give up the Point in dispute between Theists and Atheists, the Question having always been, not whether there was a Principle, (which Point was allowed by all Philosophers as well before as since

R 4      *Anaxagoras*)

DIAL. *Anaxagoras*) but whether this Principle was  
 IV. a *vēs*, a thinking intelligent Being : That is  
 to say, whether that Order and Beauty and  
 Use, visible in Natural Effects, cou'd be  
 produced by any thing but a Mind or In-  
 telligence, in the proper Sense of the Word ;  
 and whether there must not be true, real,  
 and proper Knowledge in the first Cause.  
 We will therefore acknowledge, that all  
 those natural Effects which are vulgarly  
 ascribed to Knowledge and Wisdom, pro-  
 ceed from a Being in which there is,  
 properly speaking, no Knowledge or Wis-  
 dom at all, but only something else, which,  
 in reality, is the Cause of those things  
 which Men, for want of knowing better,  
 ascribe to what they call Knowledge and  
 Wisdom and Understanding. You wonder  
 perhaps to hear a Man of Pleasure, who  
 diverts himself as I do, philosophize at  
 this rate. But you shou'd consider that  
 much is to be got by conversing with in-  
 genious Men, which is a short way to  
 Knowledge, that saves a Man the drud-  
 gery of Reading and Thinking. And now  
 we have granted to you that there is a  
 God in this indefinite Sense, I wou'd fain  
 see what use you can make of this Con-  
 cession. You cannot argue from unknown  
 Attributes, or which is the same thing,  
 from Attributes in an unknown Sense.

You



You cannot prove, that God is to be loved for his Goodness, or feared for his Justice, or respected for his Knowledge: All which Consequences, we own, wou'd follow from those Attributes admitted in an intelligible Sense. But we deny, that those or any other Consequences can be drawn from Attributes admitted in no particular Sense, or in a Sense which none of us understand. Since therefore nothing can be inferred from such an Account of God, about Conscience, or Worship, or Religion, you may e'en make the best of it; and, not to be singular, we will use the Name too, and so at once there is an end of Atheism. *EUPH.* This Account of a Deity is new to me. I do not like it, and therefore shall leave it to be maintained by those who do.

DIAL.  
IV.

XIX. *CRI.* It is not new to me. I remember not long since to have heard a Minute Philosopher triumph upon this very Point; which put me on inquiring what Foundation there was for it in the Fathers or Schoolmen. And, for ought that I can find, it owes its Original to those Writings, which have been published under the Name of *Dionysius the Areopagite*. The Author of which, it must be owned, hath written upon the Divine Attributes in a very singular Style.  
In

DIAL. In his Treatise of the Cœlestial Hierarchy \*

IV. he saith, that God is something above all  
 Essence and Life, *ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν ἔσιν καὶ ζώην*;  
 and again in his Treatise of the Divine  
 Names †, that he is above all Wisdom and  
 Understanding, *ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν σοφίαν καὶ σύνεσιν*,  
 ineffable and innominable, *ἄρρητος καὶ*  
*ἀνώνυμος*; the Wisdom of God he terms an  
 unreasonable, unintelligent, and foolish  
 Wisdom; *τὴν ἄλογον καὶ ἀνεν καὶ μωρὰν σοφίαν*.  
 But then the Reason he gives, for expres-  
 sing himself in this strange manner, is,  
 that the Divine Wisdom is the Cause of all  
 Reason, Wisdom, and Understanding, and  
 therein are contained the Treasures of all  
 Wisdom and Knowledge. He calls God  
*ὑπέρσοφος* and *ὑπέρζως*; as if Wisdom and  
 Life were Words not worthy to express  
 the Divine Perfections: And he adds, that  
 the Attributes unintelligent and unper-  
 ceiving must be ascribed to the Divinity,  
 not *κατ' ἑλλειψιν* by way of Defect, but  
*καθ' ὑπεροχὴν* by way of Eminency; which  
 he explains by our giving the Name of  
 Darkness to Light inaccessible. And, not-  
 withstanding the Harshness of his Expres-  
 sions in some Places, he affirms over and  
 over in others, that God knows all Things;  
 not that he is beholden to the Creatures for  
 his Knowledge, but by knowing himself,

\* De Hierarch. Cœlest. c. 2.

† De Nom. Div. c. 7.

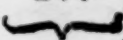
from

from whom they all derive their Being, and in whom they are contained as in their Cause. It was late before these Writings appear to have been known in the World; and although they obtained Credit during the Age of the Schoolmen, yet since critical Learning hath been cultivated, they have lost that Credit, and are at this Day given up for spurious, as containing several evident Marks of a much later Date than the Age of *Dionysius*. Upon the whole, although this Method of growing in Expression, and dwindling in Notion, of clearing up Doubts by Nonsense, and avoiding Difficulties by running into affected Contradictions, may perhaps proceed from a well-meant Zeal; yet it appears not to be according to Knowledge, and instead of reconciling Atheists to the Truth, hath, I doubt, a Tendency to confirm them in their own Persuasion. It shou'd seem, therefore, very weak and rash in a Christian to adopt this harsh Language of an Apocryphal Writer, preferably to that of the Holy Scriptures. I remember, indeed, to have read of a certain Philosopher, who lived some Centuries ago, that used to say, if these supposed Works of *Dionysius* had been known to the Primitive Fathers, they wou'd have furnished them admirable Weapons against the

DIAL. the Hæretics, and wou'd have saved a  
IV. world of Pains. But the Event since their

Discovery hath by no means confirmed his Opinion. It must be owned, the celebrated *Picus* of *Mirandula*, among his Nine Hundred Conclusions (which that Prince, being very young, proposed to maintain by public Disputation at *Rome*) hath this for one; to wit, that it is more improper to say of God, he is an Intellect or intelligent Being, than to say of a reasonable Soul that it is an Angel: Which Doctrine it seems was not relished. And *Picus*, when he comes to defend it, supports himself altogether by the Example and Authority of *Dionysius*, and in effect explains it away into a meer verbal Difference, affirming, that neither *Dionysius* nor himself ever meant to deprive God of Knowledge, or to deny that he knows all Things: But that, as Reason is of kind peculiar to Man, so by Intellection he understands a kind or manner of Knowing peculiar to Angels: And that the Knowledge, which is in God, is more above the Intellection of Angels, than Angel is above Man. He adds that, as his Tenet consists with admitting the most perfect Knowledge in God, so he wou'd by no means be understood to exclude from the Deity Intellection itself, taken in the common

or

or general Sense, but only that peculiar DIAL.  
 sort of Intellection proper to Angels, which IV.  
 he thinks ought not to be attributed to   
 God any more than Humane Reason \*.

*Picus*, therefore, though he speaks as the  
 Apocryphal *Dionysius*, yet when he ex-  
 plains himself, it is evident he speaks like  
 other Men. And although the foremen-  
 tioned Books of the Cœlestial Hierarchy  
 and of the Divine Names, being attribu-  
 ted to a Saint and Martyr of the Apostoli-  
 cal Age, were respected by the Schoolmen,  
 yet it is certain they rejected or softened his  
 harsh Expressions, and explained away or  
 reduced his Doctrine to the received No-  
 tions taken from Holy Scripture, and the  
 Light of Nature.

XX. *Thomas Aquinas* expresseth his Sense  
 of this Point in the following manner.  
 All Perfections, saith he, derived from  
 God to the Creatures are in a certain higher  
 Sense, or (as the Schoolmen term it) emi-  
 nently in God. Whenever, therefore, a  
 Name borrowed from any Perfection in the  
 Creature is attributed to God, we must ex-  
 clude from its Signification every thing  
 that belongs to the imperfect Manner,  
 wherein that Attribute is found in the  
 Creature. Whence he concludes, that

\* *Pic. Mirand. in Apolog. p. 155. Ed. Bas.*

Know-



DIAL. Knowledge in God is not an Habit, but a  
 IV. pure Act\*. And again the same Doctor  
 observes, that our Intellect gets its Notions  
 of all sorts of Perfections from the Crea-  
 tures, and that as it apprehends those Per-  
 fections, so it signifies them by Names.  
 Therefore, saith he, in attributing these  
 Names to God, we are to consider two  
 Things; first, The Perfections themselves  
 as Goodness, Life, and the like, which  
 are properly in God; and, secondly, The  
 Manner which is peculiar to the Creature,  
 and cannot, strictly and properly speaking,  
 be said to agree to the Creator†. And al-  
 though *Suarez*, with other Schoolmen,  
 teacheth, that the Mind of Man conceiv-  
 eth Knowledge and Will to be in God as  
 Faculties or Operations, by Analogy only  
 to created Beings; yet he gives it plainly  
 as his Opinion, that when Knowledge is  
 said not to be properly in God, it must be  
 understood in a Sense including Imperfec-  
 tion, such as discursive Knowledge, or the  
 like imperfect kind found in the Creatures:  
 And that, none of those Imperfections in  
 the Knowledge of Men or Angels belonging  
 to the formal Notion of Knowledge, or to  
 Knowledge as such, it will not thence follow  
 that Knowledge, in its proper formal Sense,

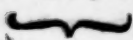
\* Sum. Theolog. p. 1. Quest. 14. Art. 1.

† Ibid. Quest. 13. Art. 3.

may not be attributed to God: And of DIAL. Knowledge taken in general for the clear IV. evident understanding of all Truth, he expressly affirms that it is in God, and that this was never denied by any Philosopher who believed a God\*. It was, indeed, a current Opinion in the Schools, that even Being itself shou'd be attributed analogically to God and the Creatures. That is, they held that God, the supreme, independent, self-originate Cause and Source of all Beings, must not be supposed to exist in the same Sense with created Beings, not that he exists less truly, properly, or formally than they, but only because he exists in a more eminent and perfect Manner.

XXI. But to prevent any Man's being led, by mistaking the Scholastic Use of the Terms *Analogy* and *Analogical*, into an Opinion that we cannot frame in any Degree, a true and proper Notion of Attributes applied by Analogy, or, in the School Phrase, predicated analogically, it may not be amiss to inquire into the true Sense and Meaning of those Words. Every one knows, that Analogy is a *Greek* Word used by Mathematicians, to signify a Similitude of Proportions. For Instance, when we observe that Two is to Six, as Three is to

\* Suarez Disp. Metaph. Tom. 2. Disp. 30. Sect. 15.

**DIAL.** Nine, this Similitude or Equality of Proportion is termed Analogy. And although  
**IV.**  Proportion strictly signifies the Habitude or Relation of one Quantity to another, yet, in a looser and translated Sense, it hath been applied to signify every other Habitude; and consequently the Term Analogy comes to signify all Similitude of Relations, or Habitudes whatsoever. Hence, the Schoolmen tell us there is Analogy between Intellect and Sight; forasmuch as Intellect is to the Mind, what Sight is to the Body? And that he who governs the State is analogous to him who steers a Ship. Hence a Prince is analogically stiled a Pilot, being to the State as a Pilot is to his Vessel\*. For the farther clearing of this Point it is to be observed, that a two-fold Analogy is distinguished by the Schoolmen, metaphorical and proper. Of the first Kind there are frequent Instances in Holy Scripture, attributing Humane Parts and Passions to God. When he is represented as having a Finger, an Eye, or an Ear, when he is said to repent, to be angry, or grieved, every one sees the Analogy is meerly metaphorical. Because those Parts and Passions, taken in the proper Signification, must in every Degree necessarily, and from the formal Nature of the

\* Vide Cajetan, de Nom. Analog. c. 3.

Thing,

Thing, include Imperfection. When DIAL.  
 therefore it is said, the Finger of God IV.  
 appears in this or that Event, Men of  
 common Sense mean no more, but  
 that it is as truly ascribed to God, as the  
 Works wrought by Humane Fingers are  
 to Man: and so of the rest. But the case  
 is different, when Wisdom and Know-  
 ledge are attributed to God. Passions and  
 Senses as such imply Defect; but in  
 Knowledge simply, or as such, there is  
 no Defect. Knowledge therefore, in the  
 proper formal meaning of the Word,  
 may be attributed to God proportiona-  
 bly, that is preserving a Proportion to the  
 infinite Nature of God. We may say,  
 therefore, that as God is infinitely above  
 Man, so is the Knowledge of God infi-  
 nitely above the Knowledge of Man,  
 and this is what *Cajetan* calls *Analogia  
 propriè facta*. And after this same Ana-  
 logy, we must understand all those Attri-  
 butes to belong to the Deity, which in  
 themselves simply, and as such, denote  
 Perfection. We may therefore consistently  
 with what hath been premised, affirm  
 that all sorts of Perfection, which we can  
 conceive in a finite Spirit, are in God,  
 but without any of that alloy which is  
 found in the Creatures. This Doctrine  
 therefore of Analogical Perfections in  
 S God,

DIAL. God, or our knowing God by Analogy,  
 IV. seems very much misunderstood and  
 misapplied by those who wou'd infer  
 from thence, that we cannot frame any  
 direct or proper Notion, though never so  
 inadequate, of Knowledge or Wisdom, as  
 they are in the Deity, or understand any  
 more of them than one born blind can of  
 Light and Colours.

XXII. And now, Gentlemen, it may  
 be expected I shou'd ask your Pardon, for  
 having dwelt so long on a point of Meta-  
 physics, and introduced such unpolished  
 and unfashionable Writers as the School-  
 men into good Company: but as *Lyficles*  
 gave the occasion, I leave him to answer  
 for it. *LYS.* I never dreamt of this dry  
 Dissertation. But, if I have been the  
 occasion of discussing these Scholastic  
 Points, by my unluckily mentioning the  
 Schoolmen, it was my first fault of the  
 kind, and I promise it shall be the last.  
 The meddling with crabbed Authors of  
 any sort is none of my taste. I grant one  
 meets now and then with a good Notion in  
 what we call dry Writers, such an one for  
 example as this I was speaking of, which I  
 must own struck my Fancy. But then  
 for these we have such as *Prodicus* or  
*Diagoras*, who look into obsolete Books, and  
 save



save the rest of us that trouble. *CRI.* So *DIAL.*  
 you pin your Faith upon them. *LYS.* It *IV.*  
 is only for some odd Opinions, and matters  
 of Fact, and critical Points. Besides, we  
 know the Men to whom we give credit:  
 They are judicious and honest, and have  
 no end to serve but Truth. And I am  
 confident some Author or other has main-  
 tained the forementioned Notion in the  
 same Sense as *Diagoras* related it. *CRI.*  
 That may be. But it never was a received  
 Notion, and never will, so long as Men  
 believe a God; the same Arguments that  
 prove a first Cause proving an intelligent  
 Cause: Intelligent, I say, in the proper  
 Sense: Wise and Good in the true and  
 formal Acceptation of the Words. Other-  
 wise it is evident, that every Syllogism  
 brought to prove those Attributes, or  
 (which is the same thing) to prove the  
 Being of a God, will be found to consist  
 of four terms, and consequently can con-  
 clude nothing. But for your part, *Alci-  
 phron*, you have been fully convinced, that  
 God is a thinking Intelligent Being in the  
 same sense with other Spirits, though not  
 in the same imperfect manner or degree.

XXIII. *ALC.* And yet I am not with-  
 out my Scruples: For with Knowledge  
 you infer Wisdom, and with Wisdom

DIAL. Goodness. But how is it possible, to

IV. conceive God so good, and Man so wicked? It may perhaps with some Colour be alledged, that a little soft shadowing of Evil sets off the bright and luminous parts of the Creation, and so contributes to the Beauty of the whole Piece: But, for Blots so large and so black it is impossible to account by that Principle. That there shou'd be so much Vice and so little Virtue upon Earth, and that the Laws of God's Kingdom shou'd be so ill observed by his Subjects, is what can never be reconciled with that surpassing Wisdom and Goodness of the supreme Monarch. EUPH. Tell me, *Alciphron*, wou'd you argue that a State was ill administr'd, or judge of the manners of its Citizens, by the Disorders committed in the Goal or Dungeon? ALC. I wou'd not. EUPH. And for ought we know, this Spot with the few Sinners on it, bears no greater Proportion to the Universe of Intelligences, than a Dungeon doth to a Kingdom. It seems we are led not only by Revelation but by common Sense, observing and inferring from the Analogy of visible Things, to conclude there are innumerable Orders of intelligent Beings more happy and more perfect than Man, whose Life is but a Span, and whose place

this

this earthly Globe is but a Point, in DIAL.  
 respect of the whole System of God's IV.  
 Creation. We are dazzled indeed with the  
 Glory and Grandeur of Things here be-  
 low, because we know no better. But I  
 am apt to think, if we knew what it was  
 to be an Angel for one hour, we shou'd  
 return to this World, though it were to  
 sit on the brightest Throne in it, with  
 vastly more loathing and reluctance, than  
 we wou'd now descend into a loathsome  
 Dungeon or Sepulchre.

XXIV. *CRI.* To me it seems natural,  
 that such a weak passionate and short-  
 sighted Creature as Man, shou'd be ever  
 liable to Scruples of one kind or other.  
 But, as this same Creature is apt to be  
 over positive in judging, and over hasty in  
 concluding, it falls out, that these Dif-  
 ficulties and Scruples about God's Con-  
 duct are made Objections to his Being.  
 And so Men come to argue from their own  
 Defects against the Divine Perfections.  
 And, as the Views and Humours of Men  
 are different and often opposite, you may  
 sometimes see them deduce the same a-  
 theistical Conclusion from contrary Pre-  
 mises. I knew an Instance of this, in two  
 Minute Philosophers of my Acquaintance,  
 who used to argue each from his own

DIAL. Temper against a Providence. One of  
 IV. them, a Man of a cholerick and vindictive  
 Spirit, said he cou'd not believe a Providence, because *London* was not swallowed up or consumed by Fire from Heaven, the Streets being as he said full of People, who shew no other Belief or Worship of God, but perpetually praying that he wou'd damn, rot, sink, and confound them. The other, being of an indolent and easy Temper, concluded there cou'd be no such thing as a Providence, for that a Being of consummate Wisdom must needemploy himself better, than in minding the Prayers, and Actions, and little Interests of Mankind. *ALC.* After all, if God have no Passions, how can it be true that Vengeance is his? Or how can he be said to be jealous of his Glory? *CRI.* We believe that God executes Vengeance without Revenge, and is jealous without Weakness, just as the mind of Man sees without Eyes, and apprehends without Hands.

XXV. *ALC.* To put a Period to this Discourse, we will grant, there is a God in this dispassionate Sense; but what then? What hath this to do with Religion or Divine Worship? To what purpose, are all these Prayers, and Praises, and  
 Thanks-

Thanksgivings, and Singing of Psalms, which the foolish Vulgar call serving God? What sense or use or end is there in all these things? *CRI.* We worship God, we praise and pray to him: not because we think that he is proud of our Worship, or fond of our Praise or Prayers, and affected with them as Mankind are, or that all our Service can contribute in the least Degree to his Happiness or Good: But because it is good for us, to be so disposed towards God: because it is just and right and suitable to the Nature of Things, and becoming the Relation we stand in to our supreme Lord and Governor. *ALC.* If it be good for us to worship God; it shou'd seem that the Christian Religion, which pretends to teach Men the Knowledge and Worship of God, was of some use and benefit to Mankind. *CRI.* Doubtless. *ALC.* If this can be made appear, I shall own myself very much mistaken. *CRI.* It is now near Dinner time. Wherefore if you please, we will put an end to this Conversation for the present, and to morrow morning resume our Subject.


DIAL.  
IV.



## The FIFTH DIALOGUE.

- I. *Minute Philosophers join in the Cry, and follow the Scent of others.* II. *Worship prescribed by the Christian Religion suitable to God and Man.* III. *Power and Influence of the Druids.* IV. *Excellency and Usefulness of the Christian Religion.* V. *It ennobles Mankind, and makes them happy.* VI. *Religion neither Bigotry nor Superstition.* VII. *Physicians and Physic for the Soul.* VIII. *Character of the Clergy.* IX. *Natural Religion and Humane Reason not to be disparaged.* X. *Tendency and Use of the Gentile Religion.* XI. *Good Effects of Christianity.* XII. *Englishmen compared with ancient Greeks and Romans.* XIII. *The Modern Practice of Duelling.* XIV. *Character of the Old Romans, how to be formed.* XV. *Genuine Fruits of the Gospel.* XVI. *Wars and Factions not an Effect of the Christian Religion.* XVII. *Civil Rage and Massacres in Greece and Rome.* XVIII. *Virtue of ancient Greeks.* XIX. *Quarrels of Polemical Divines.* XX. *Tyranny, Usurpation, Sophistry of Ecclesiastics.*

*fiastics.* XXI. *The Universities censured.* DIAL,  
XXII. *Divine Writings of a certain mo-* V.  
*dern Critic.* XXIII. *Learning the Effect*  
*of Religion.* XXIV. *Barbarism of the*  
*Schools.* XXV. *Restauration of Learning*  
*and polite Arts, to whom owing.* XXVI.  
*Prejudice and Ingratitude of Minute*  
*Philosophers.* XXVII. *Their Pretensions*  
*and Conduct inconsistent.* XXVIII. *Men*  
*and Brutes compared with respect to Reli-*  
*gion.* XXIX. *Christianity the only Means*  
*to establish Natural Religion.* XXX.  
*Free-thinkers mistake their Talents; have a*  
*strong Imagination.* XXXI. *Tithes and*  
*Church-lands.* XXXII. *Men distinguished*  
*from Humane Creatures.* XXXIII. *Dis-*  
*tribution of Mankind into Birds, Beasts,*  
*and Fishes.* XXXIV. *Plea for Reason*  
*allowed, but Unfairness taxed.* XXXV.  
*Freedom a Blessing, or a Curse as it is*  
*used.* XXXVI. *Priestcraft not the reign-*  
*ing Evil.*

I.  E amused ourselves next Day  
every one to his Fancy, till  
Nine of the Clock, when  
Word was brought that the  
Tea-table was set in the Li-  
brary, which is a Gallery on a Ground-  
floor, with an arched Door at one End  
opening into a Walk of Limes; where, as  
soon

DIAL. soon as we had drank Tea, we were  
V. tempted by fine Weather to take a Walk  
which led us to a small Mount of easy  
Ascent, on the Top whereof we found a  
Seat under a spreading Tree. Here we had  
a Prospect on one hand of a narrow Bay  
or Creek of the Sea, inclosed on either  
Side by a Coast beautified with Rocks and  
Woods, and green Banks and Farm-houses.  
At the End of the Bay was a small Town  
placed upon the Slope of a Hill, which  
from the Advantage of its Situation made  
a considerable Figure. Several Fishing-  
boats and Lighters gliding up and down  
on a Surface as smooth and bright as  
Glass enlivened the Prospect. On the  
other Side we looked down on green Pas-  
tures, Flocks, and Herds, basking beneath  
in Sun-shine, while we in our superior Si-  
tuation enjoy'd the Freshness of Air and  
Shade. Here we felt that sort of joyful  
Instinct which a rural Scene and fine Wea-  
ther inspire; and proposed no small Plea-  
sure, in resuming and continuing our Con-  
ference without Interruption till Dinner:  
But we had hardly seated ourselves, and  
looked about us, when we saw a Fox run  
by the Foot of our Mount into an adja-  
cent Thicket. A few Minutes after, we  
heard a confused Noise of the opening of  
Hounds, the winding of Horns, and the  
roaring

roaring of Country Squires. While our DIAL. Attention was suspended by this Event, a V. Servant came running out of Breath and told *Crito*, that his Neighbour *Ctesippus*, a Squire of Note, was fallen from his Horse attempting to leap over a Hedge, and brought into the Hall, where he lay for dead. Upon which we all rose and walked hastily to the House, where we found *Ctesippus* just come to himself, in the midst of half a dozen Sun-burnt Squires in Frocks and short Wigs and Jockey-Boots. Being asked how he did? he answered it was only a broken Rib. With some Difficulty *Crito* persuaded him to lie on a Bed till the Chirurgeon came. These Fox-hunters, having been up early at their Sport, were eager for Dinner, which was accordingly hastened. They passed the Afternoon in a loud rustic Mirth, gave Proof of their Religion and Loyalty by the Healths they drank, talked of Hounds and Horses and Elections and Country Affairs till the Chirurgeon, who had been employed about *Ctesippus*, desired he might be put into *Crito's* Coach, and sent home, having refused to stay all Night. Our Guests being gone, we reposed ourselves after the Fatigue of this tumultuous Visit, and next Morning assembled again at the Seat on the Mount. Now *Lyficles*,  
being

DIAL. being a nice Man, and a *bel esprit*,

V. had an infinite Contempt for the rough  
 ~~~~~ Manners and Conversation of Fox-hunters, and cou'd not reflect with Patience that he had lost, as he called it, so many Hours in their Company. I flattered myself, said he, that there had been none of this Species remaining among us: Strange that Men shou'd be diverted with such uncouth Noise and Hurry, or find Pleasure in the Society of Dogs and Horses! How much more elegant are the Diversions of the Town! There seems, replied *Euphranor*, to be some Resemblance between Fox-hunters and Free-thinkers; the former exerting their animal Faculties in pursuit of Game, as you Gentlemen employ your Intellectuals in the pursuit of Truth. The kind of Amusement is the same, although the Object be different. *LYS.* I had rather be compared to any Brute upon Earth than a rational Brute. *CRI.* You wou'd then have been less displeased with my Friend *Pythocles*, whom I have heard compare the common sort of Minute Philosophers, not to the Hunters, but the Hounds. For, said he, you shall often see among the Dogs a loud Babler, with a bad Nose, lead the unskilful part of the Pack, who join all in his Cry without following any Scent of their own, any  
 more



more than the Herd of Free-thinkers follow their own Reason. DIAL.

V.

II. But *Pythocles* was a blunt Man, and must never have known such Reasoners among them as you Gentlemen, who can sit so long at an Argument, dispute every Inch of Ground, and yet know when to make a reasonable Concession. *LRS.* I don't know how it comes to pass, but methinks *Alciphron* makes Concessions for himself and me too. For my own part, I am not altogether of such a yielding Temper: But yet I don't care to be singular neither. *CRI.* Truly, *Alciphron*, when I consider where we are got, and how far we are agreed, I conceive it probable we may agree altogether in the end.. You have granted that a Life of Virtue is upon all Accounts eligible, as most conducive both to the general and particular Good of Mankind: And you allow, that the Beauty of Virtue alone is not a sufficient Motive with Mankind to the Practice of it. This led you to acknowledge, that the Belief of a God wou'd be very useful in the World; and that consequently you shou'd be disposed to admit any reasonable Proof of his Being: Which Point hath been proved, and you have admitted the Proof. If then we admit a Divinity, why not  
Divine

DIAL. Divine Worship? And if Worship, why

V. not Religion to teach this Worship? And  
 if a Religion, why not the Christian, if  
 a better cannot be assigned, and it be  
 already established by the Laws of our  
 Country, and handed down to us from  
 our Fore-fathers? Shall we believe a God,  
 and not pray to him for future Benefits nor  
 thank him for the past? Neither trust in  
 his Protection, nor love his Goodness, nor  
 praise his Wisdom, nor adore his Power?  
 And if these Things are to be done, can  
 we do them in a Way more suitable to the  
 Dignity of God or Man, than is prescribed  
 by the Christian Religion? *ALC.* I am  
 not perhaps altogether sure that Religion  
 must be absolutely bad for the Public: But  
 I cannot bear to see Policy and Religion  
 walk hand in hand: I do not like to see  
 Humane Rights attached to the Divine:  
 I am for no *Pontifex Maximus*, such as in  
 ancient or in modern *Rome*: No High  
 Priest, as in *Judæa*: No Royal Priests, as  
 in *Ægypt* and *Sparta*: No such Things as  
*Dairos* of *Japan*, or *Lamas* of *Tartary*.

III. I knew a late witty Gentleman of  
 our Sect, who was a great Admirer of the  
 ancient *Druids*. He had a mortal Antipa-  
 thy to the present established Religion, but  
 used to say he shou'd like well to see the  
*Druids*

*Druids* and their Religion restored, as it DIAL.  
 anciently flourished in *Gaul* and *Britain*; V.  
 for it wou'd be right enough that there ~  
 shou'd be a Number of contemplative Men  
 set apart to preserve a Knowledge of Arts  
 and Sciences, to educate Youth, and teach  
 Men the Immortality of the Soul and the  
 moral Virtues. Such, said he, were the  
*Druids* of old, and I shou'd be glad  
 to see them once more established among  
 us. *CRI.* How wou'd you like, *Alci-*  
*phron*, that Priests shou'd have Power to  
 decide all Controversies, adjudge Property,  
 distribute Rewards and Punishments; that  
 all who did not acquiesce in their Decrees  
 shou'd be excommunicated, held in Abhor-  
 rence, excluded from all Honours and Pri-  
 vileges, and deprived of the common Bene-  
 fit of the Laws; and that now and then,  
 a Number of Lay-men shou'd be cram-  
 med together in a Wicker-idol, and burnt  
 for an Offering to their Pagan Gods? How  
 shou'd you like living under such Priests and  
 such a Religion? *ALC.* Not at all. Such a  
 Situation wou'd by no means agree with  
 Free-thinkers. *CRI.* And yet such were  
 the *Druids* and such their Religion, if we  
 may trust *Cæsar's* Account of them\*. *LYS.*  
 I am now convinced more than ever, there  
 ought to be no such Thing as an established

\* De Bello Gallico, l. 6.

DIAL. Religion of any kind. Certainly all the Nations of the World have been hitherto out of their Wits. Even the *Athenians* themselves, the wisest and freest People upon Earth, had, I know not what, foolish Attachment to their established Church. They offered it seems a Talent as a Reward to whoever shou'd kill *Diagoras* the *Melian*, a Free-thinker of those Times who derided their Mysteries: And *Protagoras*, another of the same Turn, narrowly escaped being put to Death, for having wrote something that seemed to contradict their received Notions of the Gods. Such was the Treatment our generous Sect met with at *Athens*. And I make no doubt, but these *Druids* wou'd have sacrificed many a Holocaust of Free-thinkers. I wou'd not give a single Farthing to exchange one Religion for another. Away with all together, Root and Branch, or you had as good do nothing. No *Druids* or Priests of any sort for me: I see no occasion for any of them.

IV. *EUPH.* What *Lyficles* saith puts me in mind of the Close of our last Conference, wherein it was agreed, in the following to resume the Point we were then entered upon, to wit, the Use or Benefit of the Christian Religion, which *Alciphron* expected

expected *Crito* shou'd make appear. CRI. DIAL.

V.

I am the readier to undertake this Point, because I conceive it to be no difficult one, and that one great Mark of the Truth of Christianity is, in my mind, its Tendency to do good, which seems the North Star to conduct our Judgment in moral Matters, and in all Things of a practic Nature; Moral or practical Truths being ever connected with universal Benefit. But to judge rightly of this Matter, we shou'd endeavour to act like *Lyficles* upon another Occasion, taking into our View the Sum of Things, and considering Principles as branched forth into Consequences to the utmost Extent we are able. We are not so much to regard the Humour or Caprice, or imaginary Distresses of a few idle Men, whose Conceit may be offended, though their Conscience cannot be wounded; but fairly to consider the true Interest of Individuals as well as of Humane Society. Now the Christian Religion, considered as a Fountain of Light, and Joy, and Peace, as a Source of Faith, and Hope, and Charity, (and that it is so will be evident to whoever takes his Notion of it from the Gospel) must needs be a Principle of Happiness and Virtue. And he who sees not, that the destroying the Principles of good Actions must destroy good Actions, sees

T nothing:



DIAL. nothing: And he who, seeing this, shall  
 V. yet persist to do it, if he be not wicked,  
 { who is?

V. To me it seems the Man can see neither deep nor far, who is not sensible of his own Misery, Sinfulness, and Dependence; who doth not perceive, that this present World is not designed or adapted to make rational Souls happy; who would not be glad of getting into a better State, and who would not be overjoy'd to find, that the Road leading thither was the Love of God and Man, the practising every Virtue, the living reasonably while we are here upon Earth, proportioning our Esteem to the Value of Things, and so using this World as not to abuse it? For this is what Christianity requires. It neither enjoins the Nastiness of the Cynic, nor the Insensibility of the Stoic. Can there be a higher Ambition than to overcome the World, or a wiser than to subdue ourselves, or a more comfortable Doctrine than the Remission of Sins, or a more joyful Prospect than that of having our base Nature renewed and assimilated to the Deity, our being made Fellow-citizens with Angels and Sons of God? Did ever *Pythagoreans*, or *Platonists*, or Stoics, even in Idea or in Wish, propose to the Mind of Man purer Means,

or a nobler End? How great a Share of DIAL.  
our Happiness depends upon Hope! How V.  
totally is this extinguished by the Minute  
Philosophy! On the other hand, how is it  
cherished and raised by the Gospel! Let  
any Man who thinks in earnest but consider these Things, and then say which he thinks deserveth best of Mankind, he who recommends, or he who runs down Christianity? Which he thinks likelier to lead a happy Life, to be a hopeful Son, an honest Dealer, a worthy Patriot, He who sincerely believes the Gospel, or He who believes not one Tittle of it? He who aims at being a Child of God, or He who is contented to be thought, and to be, one of *Epicurus's* Hogs? And in fact do but scan the Characters, and observe the Behaviour of the common sort of Men on both sides: Observe and say which live most agreeably to the Dictates of Reason? How Things shou'd be, the Reason is plain; how they are, I appeal to Fact.

VI. *ALC.* It is wonderful to observe how Things change Appearance, as they are viewed in different Lights, or by different Eyes. The Picture, *Crito*, that I form of Religion is very unlike yours, when I consider how it unmans the Soul, filling it with absurd Reveries and slavish Fears; how it

DIAL. extinguishes the gentle Passions, inspiring  
 V. a Spirit of Malice, and Rage, and Persecution: When I behold bitter Resentments and unholy Wrath in those very Men, who preach up Meekness and Charity to others. CRI. It is very possible, that Gentlemen of your Sect may think Religion a Subject beneath their Attention; but yet it seems that whoever sets up for opposing any Doctrine, shou'd know what it is he disputes against. Know then, that Religion is the virtuous Mean between Incredulity and Superstition. We do not therefore contend for superstitious Follies, or for the Rage of Bigots. What we plead for is Religion against Profaneness, Law against Confusion, Virtue against Vice, the Hope of a Christian against the Despondency of an Atheist. I will not justify bitter Resentments and unholy Wrath in any Man, much less in a Christian, and least of all in a Clergyman. But if Sallies of Humane Passion shou'd sometimes appear even in the best, it will not surprise any one who reflects on the Sarcasms and ill Manners with which they are treated by the Minute Philosophers. For as *Cicero* somewhere observes, *Habet quendam aculeum Contumelia, quem pati prudentes ac viri boni difficillimè possunt*. But although you might sometimes observe particular

tical Persons, professing themselves Christians, run into faulty Extremes of any kind through Passion and Infirmary, while Infidels of a more calm and dispassionate Temper shall perhaps behave better. Yet these natural Tendencies on either side prove nothing, either in favour of Infidel Principles, or against Christian. If a Believer doth Evil it is owing to the Man not to his Belief. And if an Infidel doth good it is owing to the Man and not to his Infidelity.

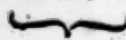
DIAL.

V.

VII. *LRS.* To cut this Matter short, I shall borrow an Allusion to Physic, which one of you made use of against our Sect. It will not be denied, that the Clergy pass for Physicians of the Soul, and that Religion is a sort of Medicine which they deal in and administer. If then Souls in great numbers are diseased and lost, how can we think the Physician skilful or his Physic good? It is a common Complaint, that Vice increases, and Men grow daily more and more wicked. If a Shepherd's Flock be diseased or unsound, who is to blame but the Shepherd, for neglecting or not knowing how to cure them? a Fig therefore for such Shepherds, such Physic, and such Physicians, who like other Mountebanks, with great Gra-

DIAL. vity and elaborate Harangues put off their

V. Pills to the People, who are never the

 better for them. *EUPH.* Nothing seems more reasonable than this Remark, that Men shou'd judge of a Physician, and his Physic by its Effect on the Sick. But pray, *Lyficles*, wou'd you judge of a Physician by those Sick, who take his Physic and follow his Prescriptions, or by those who do not? *LYS.* Doubtless by those who do. *EUPH.* What shall we say then, if great numbers refuse to take the Physick, or instead of it take Poison of a direct contrary Nature prescribed by others, who make it their Business to discredit the Physician and his Medicines, to hinder Men from using them, and to destroy their Effect by Drugs of their own? Shall the Physician be blamed for the miscarriage of those People? *LYS.* By no means. *EUPH.* By a parity of Reason shou'd it not follow, that the Tendency of religious Doctrines ought to be judged of by the Effects which they produce, not upon all who hear them, but upon those only who receive or believe them? *LYS.* It seems so. *EUPH.* Therefore to proceed fairly, shall we not judge of the Effects of Religion by the religious, of Faith by Believers, of Christianity by Christians?

VIII. *LYS.*



VIII. *LYS.* But I doubt these sincere *DIAL.*  
Believers are very few. *EUPH.* But will *V.*  
it not suffice to justify our Principles, if in  
proportion to the Numbers which receive  
them, and the degree of Faith with which  
they are received, they produce good Ef-  
fects. Perhaps the number of Believers  
are not so few as you imagine; and if they  
were, whose fault is that so much as of  
those who make it their professed Endeav-  
our to lessen that number? And who are  
those but the Minute Philosophers? *LYS.*  
I tell you it is owing to the Clergy them-  
selves, to the Wickedness and Corruption  
of Clergymen. *EUPH.* And who denies  
but there may be Minute Philosophers even  
among the Clergy? *CRI.* In so numerous  
a Body it is to be presumed there are Men  
of all sorts. But notwithstanding the cruel  
Reproaches cast upon that Order by their  
Enemies, an equal Observer of Men and  
Things will, if I mistake not, be inclined  
to think those Reproaches owing as much  
to other Faults as those of the Clergy, es-  
pecially if he considers the declamatory  
manner of those who censure them.  
*EUPH.* My Knowledge of the World is  
too narrow for me to pretend to judge of  
the Virtue and Merit and liberal Attain-  
ments of Men in the several Professions.  
Besides, I shou'd not care for the odious

DIAL. work of Comparifon : But I may venture  
 V. to fay, the Clergy of this Country where  
 I live are by no means a difgrace to it: on  
 the contrary, the People feem much the  
 better for their Example and Doctrinẽ.  
 But fupposing the Clergy to be (what all  
 Men certainly are) Sinners and faulty;  
 fupposing you might fpy out here and there  
 among them even great Crimes and Vices,  
 what can you conclude againft the Profef-  
 fion it felf from its unworthy Profeffors,  
 any more than from the Pride, Pedantry,  
 and bad Lines of fome Philofophers againft  
 Philofophy, or of Lawyers againft Law?

IX. It is certainly right to judge of Prin-  
 ciples from their Effects, but then we muft  
 know them to be Effects of thofe Prin-  
 ciples. It is the very Method I have obfer-  
 ved, with refpect to Religion and the Mi-  
 nute Philofophy. And I can honeftly  
 aver, that I never knew any Man or Fa-  
 mily grow worfe in proportion as they grew  
 religious: But I have often obferved that  
 Minute Philofophy is the worft thing which  
 can get into a Family, the readieft way to  
 impoverifh, divide and difgrace it. *ALC.*  
 By the fame Method of tracing Caufes  
 from their Effects, I have made it my  
 Obfervation, that the love of Truth, Vir-  
 tue, and the Happinefs of Mankind are  
 fpecious

specious Pretexts, but not the inward Principles that set Divines at work : Else why shou'd they affect to abuse Humane Reason, to disparage natural Religion, to traduce the Philosophers as they universally do?

*CRI.* Not so universally perhaps as you imagine. A Christian, indeed, is for confining Reason within its due Bounds; and so is every reasonable Man. If we are forbid meddling with unprofitable Questions, vain Philosophy, and Science falsely so called, it cannot be thence inferred, that all Inquiries into profitable Questions, useful Philosophy, and true Science, are unlawful. A Minute Philosopher may indeed impute, and perhaps a weak Brother may imagine those Inferences, but Men of Sense will never make them. God is the common Father of Lights; and all Knowledge really such, whether natural or revealed, is derived from the same Source of Light and Truth. To amass together Authorities upon so plain a Point wou'd be needless. It must be owned some Mens attributing too much to Humane Reason, hath, as is natural, made others attribute too little to it. But thus much is generally acknowledged, that there is a natural Religion, which may be discovered and proved by the light of Reason, to those who are capable of such Proofs. But it must be  
withal

DIAL. withal acknowledged, that Precepts and  
 V. Oracles from Heaven are incomparably  
 { better suited to popular Improvement and  
 the good of Society, than the Reasonings  
 of Philosophers; and accordingly we do  
 not find, that natural or rational Religion  
 ever became the popular national Religion  
 of any Country.

X. *ALC.* It cannot be denied, that in  
 all Heathen Countries there have been re-  
 ceived under the colour of Religion, a  
 world of Fables and superstitious Rites.  
 But I question whether they were so absurd  
 and of so bad Influence as is vulgarly re-  
 presented, since their respective Legislators  
 and Magistrates must, without doubt, have  
 thought them useful. *CRI.* It were need-  
 less to inquire into all the Rites and No-  
 tions of the Gentile World. This hath  
 been largely done when it was thought ne-  
 cessary. And whoever thinks it worth  
 while may be easily satisfied about them.  
 But as to the Tendency and Usefulness of  
 the Heathen Religion in general, I beg  
 leave to mention a Remark of St. *Augu-*  
*stine's*†, who observes that the Heathens  
 in their Religion had no Assemblies for  
 preaching, wherein the People were to be  
 instructed what Duties or Virtues the Gods

† De civitate Dei l. 2.

required,

required, no Place or Means to be taught DIAL.  
 what *Perfius* \* exhorts them to learn. V.

*Disciteque ô miseri, & causas cognoscite rerum,  
 Quid sumus, & quidnam victuri gignimur. —*

*ALC.* This is the true Spirit of the Party, never to allow a Grain of Use or Goodness to any thing out of their own Pale: But we have had learned Men who have done Justice to the Religion of the *Gentiles*.

*CRI.* We do not deny but there was something useful in the old Religions of *Rome* and *Greece*, and some other Pagan Countries. On the contrary, we freely own they produced some good Effects on the People: But then these good Effects were owing to the Truths contained in those false Religions, the truer therefore the more useful. I believe you will find it a hard Matter to produce any useful Truth, any moral Precept, any salutary Principle or Notion in any Gentile System, either of Religion or Philosophy, which is not comprehended in the Christian, and either enforced by stronger Motives, or supported by better Authority, or carried to a higher Point of Perfection.

XI. Consequently you wou'd have us think our selves a finer People than the an-

\* Sat. 3.

cient



DIAL. cient *Greeks* or *Romans*. CRI. If by  
 V. finer you mean better, perhaps we are;  
 and if we are not, it is not owing to the  
 Christian Religion, but to the want of it.  
 ALC. You say perhaps we are. I do not  
 pique my self on my reading: But shou'd  
 be very ignorant to be capable of being  
 imposed on in so plain a Point. What!  
 compare *Cicero* or *Brutus* to an *English*  
 Patriot, or *Seneca* to one of our Parsons!  
 Then that invincible Constancy and Vigour  
 of Mind, that disinterested and noble Vir-  
 tue, that adorable publick Spirit you so  
 much admire, are things in them so well  
 known, and so different from our Manners,  
 that I know not how to excuse your *per-*  
*haps*. *Euphranor*, indeed, who passeth his  
 Life in this obscure Corner, may possibly  
 mistake the Characters of our Times, but  
 you who know the World, how cou'd you  
 be guilty of such a Mistake? CRI. O  
*Alciphron*, I wou'd by no means detract  
 from the noble Virtue of ancient Heroes:  
 But I observe those great Men were not the  
 Minute Philosophers of their Times;  
 that the best Principles upon which they  
 acted are common to them with Christians,  
 of whom it wou'd be no difficult Matter  
 to assign many Instances, in every kind of  
 Worth and Virtue, publick or private,  
 equal to the most celebrated of the An-  
 cients,

cients. Though perhaps their Story might not have been so well told, set off with such fine Lights and colourings of Style, or so vulgarly known and considered by every School-boy. But though it shou'd be granted, that here and there a *Greek* or *Roman* Genius, bred up under strict Laws and severe Discipline, animated to public Virtue by Statues, Crowns, Triumphal Arches, and such Rewards and Monuments of great Actions, might attain to a Character and Fame beyond other Men, yet this will prove only, that they had more Spirit and lived under a civil Polity more wisely ordered in certain points than ours; Which advantages of Nature and civil Institution will be no Argument for their Religion or against ours. On the contrary, it seems an invincible Proof of the Power and Excellency of the Christian Religion, that, without the help of those civil Institutions and Incentives to Glory, it shou'd be able to inspire a Phlegmatic People with the noblest Sentiments, and soften the rugged Manners of Northern Boors into Gentleness and Humanity: and that these good Qualities shou'd become National, and rise and fall in proportion to the Purity of our Religion, as it approaches to, or recedes from the Plan laid down in the Gospel.

DIAL.

V.

DIAL. XII. To make a right Judgment of the  
V. Effects of the Christian Religion, let us  
take a survey of the prevailing Notions  
and Manners of this very Country where  
we live, and compare them with those of  
our Heathen Predecessors. *ALC.* I have  
heard much of the glorious Light of the  
Gospel, and shou'd be glad to see some  
Effects of it in my own dear Country,  
which, by the bye, is one of the most  
corrupt and profligate upon Earth, not-  
withstanding the boasted Purity of our  
Religion. But it wou'd look mean and  
diffident, to affect a Comparifon with the  
barbarous Heathen, from whence we  
drew our Original : If you wou'd do ho-  
nour to your Religion, dare to make it  
with the most renowned Heathens of An-  
tiquity. *CR I.* It is a common Prejudice,  
to despise the present and over-rate re-  
mote Times and Things. Something of  
this seems to enter into the Judgments Men  
make of the *Greeks* and *Romans*. For though  
it must be allowed, those Nations produ-  
ced some noble Spirits and great Paterns  
of Virtue: yet upon the whole, it seems  
to me they were much inferior in point of  
real Virtue and good Morals, even to  
this corrupt and profligate Nation, as you  
are now pleased to call it in dishonour to  
our Religion; however you may think fit

to characterize it, when you wou'd do honour to the Minute Philosophy. This, I think, will be plain to any one, who shall turn off his Eyes from a few shining Characters, to view the general Manners and Customs of those People. Their insolent treatment of Captives, even of the highest Rank and softer Sex, their unnatural exposing of their own Children, their bloody Gladiatorian Spectacles, compared with the common Notions of *Englishmen*, are to me a plain Proof, that our Minds are much softened by Christianity. Cou'd any thing be more unjust, than the condemning a young Lady to the most infamous Punishment and Death for the guilt of her Father, or a whole Family of Slaves, perhaps some hundreds for a Crime committed by one? Or more Abominable than their Bacchanals and unbridled Lusts of every kind? which, notwithstanding all that has been done by Minute Philosophers to debauch the Nation, and their successful Attempts on some part of it, have not yet been matched among us, at least not in every circumstance of Impudence and Effrontery. While the *Romans* were poor, they were temperate; but, as they grew rich, they became luxurious to a degree that is hardly believed or conceived by us. It cannot  
be

DIAL:  
V.

DIAL. be denied, the old *Roman* Spirit was a great one. But it is as certain, there have been numberless Examples of the most resolute and clear Courage in *Britons*, and in general from a Religious Cause. Upon the whole, it seems an instance of the greatest Blindness and Ingratitude, that we do not see and own the exceeding great Benefits of Christianity, which, to omit higher considerations, hath so visibly softened, polished, and embellished our Manners.

XIII. *ALC.* O *Crito*, we are alarmed at Cruelty in a foreign Shape, but overlook it in a familiar one. Else how is it possible that you shou'd not see the Inhumanity of that barbarous Custom of Dueling, a thing avowed and tolerated and even reputable among us? Or that seeing this, you shou'd suppose our *Englishmen* of a more gentle disposition than the old *Romans*, who were altogether Strangers to it? *CRI.* I will by no means make an Apology for every *Goth* that walks the Streets, with a determined purpose to murder any Man who shall but spit in his Face, or give him the Lye. Nor do I think the Christian Religion is in the least answerable, for a practice so directly opposite to its Precepts, and which obtains only



DIAL:  
V.

only among the idle part of the Nation, your Men of Fashion; who, instead of Law, Reason or Religion, are governed by Fashion. Be pleased to consider that what may be, and truly is, a most scandalous reproach to a Christian Country, may be none at all to the Christian Religion: For the Pagan encouraged Men in several Vices, but the Christian in none. *ALC.* Give me leave to observe, that what you now say is foreign to the purpose. For the question, at present, is not concerning the respective tendencies of the Pagan and the Christian Religions, but concerning our Manners, as actually compared with those of ancient Heathens, who I aver had no such barbarous Custom as Dueling. *CRI.* And I aver that, bad as this is, they had a worse; and that was Poisoning. By which we have reason to think there were many more Lives destroyed, than by this *Gothic* Crime of Dueling: Inasmuch as it extended to all Ages, Sexes, and Characters, and as its Effects were more secret and unavoidable; and as it had more Temptations, Interest as well as Passion, to recommend it to wicked Men. And for the Fact, not to waste time, I refer you to the *Roman* Authors themselves. *LYS.* It is very true: Dueling is not so general a Nuisance as Poisoning,

U

ing,

DIAL. ing, nor of so base a Nature. This Crime,  
 V. if it be a Crime, is in a fair way to keep  
 its ground in spite of the Law and the Gospel. The Clergy never preach against it, because themselves never suffer by it: and the Man of honour must not appear against the means of vindicating Honour.

*CRI.* Though it be remarked by some of your Sect, that the Clergy are not used to preach against Duelling, yet I neither think the Remark it self just, nor the Reason assigned for it. In effect, one half of their Sermons, all that is said of Charity, Brotherly Love, Forbearance, Meekness, and Forgiving Injuries is directly against this wicked Custom; by which the Clergy themselves are so far from never suffering, that perhaps they will be found, all things considered, to suffer oftner than other Men.

*LVS.* How do you make this appear? *CRI.* An Observer of Mankind may remark two kinds of Bully, the Fighting and the Tame, both public Nufances, the former (who is the more dangerous Animal, but by much the less common of the two) employs himself wholly and solely against the Laity, while the tame Species exert their Talents upon the Clergy. The Qualities constituent of this tame Bully are natural Rudeness joined with a delicate sense of Danger.

Danger. For, you must know, the force of inbred Insolence and ill Manners is not diminished, though it acquire a new Determination, from the fashionable custom of calling Men to account for their Behaviour. Hence you may often see one of these tame Bullies ready to burst with Pride and ill Humour, which he dares not vent till a Parson has come in the way to his Relief. And the Man of Raillery, who wou'd as soon bite off his Tongue, as break a jest on the profession of Arms in the presence of a military Man, shall instantly brighten up, and assume a familiar Air with Religion and the Church before Ecclesiastics. *Dorcon*, who passes for a Poltron and stupid in all other Company, and really is so, when he is got among Clergymen, affects a quite opposite Character. And many *Dorcons* there are, which owe their Wit and Courage to this Passive Order.

XIV. *ALC.* But, to return to the point in hand, can you deny, the old *Romans* were as famous for Justice and Integrity, as Men in these days for the contrary Qualities? *CRI.* The Character of the *Romans* is not to be taken from the Sentiments of *Tully*, or *Cato's* Actions, or a shining passage here and there in their History,

DIAL. History, but from the prevailing tenor of  
 V. their Lives and Notions. Now if they  
 and our modern *Britons* are weighed in  
 this same equal balance, you will, if I  
 mistake not, appear to have been prejudiced in favour of the old *Romans* against your own Country, probably because it professeth Christianity. Whatever instances of Fraud or Injustice may be seen in Christians carry their own censure with them, in the care that is taken to conceal them, and the shame that attends their discovery. There is, even at this day, a sort of Modesty in all our public Councils and Deliberations. And I believe, the boldest of our Minute Philosophers wou'd hardly undertake in a popular Assembly, to propose any thing parallel to the Rape of the *Sabines*, the most unjust usage of *Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus*, or the ungrateful treatment of *Camillus*, which, as a learned Father observes, were instances of Iniquity agreed to by the public body of the *Romans*. And if *Rome* in her early days were capable of such flagrant Injustice, it is most certain she did not mend her Manners, as she grew great in Wealth and Empire, having produced Monsters in every kind of Wickedness, as far exceeding other Men, as they surpassed them in power. I freely  
 acknow-

acknowledge, the Christian Religion hath not had the same influence upon the Nation, that it wou'd in case it had been always professed in its Purity, and cordially believed by all Men. But I will venture to say, that if you take the *Roman* History from one end to the other, and impartially compare it with our own, you will neither find them so good, nor your Countrymen so bad as you imagine. On the contrary an indifferent Eye may, I verily think, perceive a vein of Charity and Justice, the effect of Christian Principles, run through the latter; which, though not equally discernible in all parts, yet discloseth it self sufficiently to make a wide difference upon the whole in spite of the general Appetites and Passions of Humane Nature, as well as of the particular hardness and roughness of the block out of which we were hewn. And it is observable (what the *Roman* Authors themselves do often suggest) that, even their Virtues and magnanimous Actions rose and fell with a sense of Providence, and a future State, and a Philosophy the nearest to the Christian Religion.

XV. *Crito* having spoke thus, paused. But *Alciphron* addressing himself to *Euphranor* and me, said, It is natural for  
U 3 Men,



DIAL. Men, according to their several Educa-  
 V. tions and Prejudices, to form contrary  
 Judgments upon the same things, which  
 they view in very different lights. *Crito*,  
 for instance, imagines that none but Sa-  
 lutory Effects proceed from Religion: on  
 the other hand, if you appeal to the gene-  
 ral Experience and Observation of other  
 Men, you shall find it grown into a Pro-  
 verb that Religion is the root of evil.

*Tantum Relligio potuit suadere malorum.*

And this not only among *Epicureans* or  
 other ancient Heathens, but among Mo-  
 derns speaking of the Christian Religion.  
 Now methinks it is unreasonable to oppose  
 against the general concurring Opinion of  
 the World, the Observation of a particu-  
 lar Person, or particular set of Zealots,  
 whose Prejudice sticks close to them, and  
 ever mixeth with their Judgment; and  
 who read, collect, and observe with an Eye  
 not to discover the Truth, but to defend  
 their Prejudice. *CRI.* Though I cannot  
 think with *Alciphron*, yet I must own, I  
 admire his Address and Dexterity in Ar-  
 gument. Popular and general Opinion is  
 by him represented, on certain occasions,  
 to be a sure mark of Error. But when  
 it serves his ends that it shou'd seem o-  
 therwise, he can as easily make it a  
 Cha-

Character of Truth. But it will by no means follow, that a profane Proverb used by the Friends and admired Authors of a Minute Philosopher, must therefore be a received Opinion, much less a Truth grounded on the Experience and Observation of Mankind. Sadness may spring from Guilt or Superstition, and Rage from Bigotry, but Darkness might as well be supposed the natural Effect of Sunshine, as sullen and furious Passions to proceed from the glad Tidings and divine Precepts of the Gospel. What is the Sum and Substance, Scope and End of Christ's Religion, but the Love of God and Man? To which all other Points and Duties are relative and subordinate, as Parts or Means, as Signs, Principles, Motives, or Effects. Now I wou'd fain know, how it is possible for Evil or Wickedness of any kind to spring from such a source. I will not pretend, there are no evil Qualities in Christians, nor good in Minute Philosophers. But this I affirm, that whatever evil is in us, our Principles certainly lead to Good; and whatever good there may be in you, it is most certain your Principles lead to evil.

DIAL.

V.

XVI. *ALC.* It must be owned there is a fair outside, and many plausible things

U 4


may

DIAL. may be said, for the Christian Religion taken  
 V. simply as it lies in the Gospel. But it is  
 { the Observation of one of our great  
 Writers, that the first Christian Preachers  
 very cunningly began with the fairest Face  
 and the best moral Doctrines in the World.  
 It was all Love, Charity, Meekness, Pa-  
 tience and so forth. But when by this  
 means they had drawn over the World  
 and got Power, they soon changed their  
 Appearance, and shewed Cruelty, Ambi-  
 tion, Avarice and every bad quality. CRI.  
 That is to say some Men very cunningly  
 preached and underwent a world of hard-  
 ships, and laid down their lives to propa-  
 gate the best Principles and the best  
 Morals, to the end that others some Cen-  
 turies after might reap the benefit of bad  
 ones. Whoever may be cunning, there is  
 not much Cunning in the maker of this  
 Observation. ALC. And yet ever since  
 this Religion hath appeared in the World,  
 we have had eternal Feuds, Factions, Mas-  
 sacres and Wars, the very reverse of that  
 Hymn with which it is introduced in the  
 Gospel: *Glory be to God on high, on Earth  
 Peace, Good-will towards Men.* CRI. This  
 I will not deny. I will even own that the  
 Gospel and the Christian Religion have  
 been often the Pretexes for these Evils; but  
 it will not thence follow they were the  
 Cause,

Cause. On the contrary it is plain they cou'd not be the real proper Cause of these Evils, because a rebellious, proud, revengeful, quarrellsome Spirit is directly opposite to the whole Tenor and most exprefs Precepts of Christianity: a Point so clear that I shall not prove it. And secondly, because all those Evils you mention were as frequent, nay, much more frequent, before the Christian Religion was known in the World. They are the common Product of the Passions and Vices of Mankind, which are sometimes covered with the Masque of Religion by wicked Men, having the Form of Godliness without the Power of it. This Truth seems so plain, that I am surpris'd how any Man of Sense, Knowledge, and Candour can make a doubt of it.

XVII. Take but a view of Heathen Rome; what a Scene is there of Faction and Fury and civil Rage? Let any Man consider the perpetual Feuds between the *Patricians* and *Plebeians*, the bloody and inhumane Factions of *Marius* and *Sylla*, *Cinna* and *Octavius*, and the vast havoc of Mankind, during the two famous Triumvirates. To be short, let any Man of common Candour and common Sense but cast an Eye, from one end to the other of the *Roman* Story, and behold that  
long

DIAL. long Scene of Seditions, Murders, Massacres,

V.  Proscriptions and Desolations of every kind, enhanced by every cruel circumstance of Rage, Rapine and Revenge, and then say, whether those Evils were introduced into the World with the Christian Religion, or whether they are not less frequent now than before? *ALC.* The ancient *Romans*, it must be owned, had a high and fierce Spirit, which produced eager Contentions and very bloody Catastrophes. The *Greeks*, on the other hand, were a polite and gentle sort of Men, softened by Arts and Philosophy. It is impossible to think of the little States and Cities of *Greece*, without wishing to have lived in those times, without admiring their Policy and envying their Happiness. *CRI.* Men are apt to consider the dark sides of what they possess, and the bright ones of things out of their reach. A fine Climate, elegant Taste, polite Amusements, love of Liberty, and a most ingenious inventive Spirit for Arts and Sciences were indisputable Prerogatives of ancient *Greece*. But as for Peace and Quietness, Gentleness and Humanity, I think we have plainly the advantage: For those envied Cities composed of gentle *Greeks* were not without their Factions, which persecuted each other with such Treachery, Rage,



Rage, and Malice, that in respect of them DIAL.  
 our factious Folk are meer Lambs. To be V.  
 convinced of this Truth, you need only  
 look into *Thucydides*\*, where you will find  
 those Cities in general involved in such  
 bitter Factions, as for Fellow-Citizens  
 without the formalities of War, to murder  
 one another, even in their Senate-  
 houses and their Temples, no regard being  
 had to Merit, Rank, Obligation, or  
 Nearness of Blood. And if Humane Nature  
 boiled up to so vehement a pitch in the  
 politest People, what wonder that savage  
 Nations shou'd scalp, roast, torture, and  
 destroy each other, as they are known to  
 do? It is therefore plain, that without  
 Religion there wou'd not be wanting Pre-  
 texts for Quarrels and Debates; all which  
 can very easily be accounted for by the  
 natural Infirmities and Corruption of Men.  
 It wou'd not perhaps be so easy to account  
 for the Blindness of those, who impute the  
 most hellish Effects to the most divine  
 Principle, if they cou'd be supposed in earnest,  
 and to have considered the Point. One may  
 daily see ignorant and prejudiced Men make  
 the most absurd Blunders: But that Free-  
 thinkers, Divers to the Bottom of Things,  
 Fair Inquirers, and Openers of Eyes should  
 be capable of such a gross Mistake, is what  
 one would not expect.

\* *Thucyd.* l. 3.

DIAL. XVIII. *ALC.* The rest of Mankind

V. we cou'd more easily give up: but as for  
the *Greeks*, Men of the most refined Genius express an high esteem of them, not only on account of those Qualities which you think fit to allow them, but also for their Virtues. *CRI.* I shall not take upon me to say how far some Men may be prejudiced against their Country, or whether others may not be prejudiced in favour of it. But upon the fullest and most equal Observation that I am able to make, it is my opinion, that, if by Virtue is meant Truth, Justice, Gratitude, there is incomparably more Virtue, now at this day in *England*, than at any time cou'd be found in ancient *Greece*. Thus much will be allowed, that we know few Countries, if any, where Men of eminent Worth, and famous for deserving well of the Public, met with harder Fate, and were more ungratefully treated than in the most polite and learned of the *Grecian* States. Though *Socrates* it must be owned wou'd not allow, that those Statesmen, by adorning the City, augmenting the Fleet, or extending the Commerce of *Athens*, deserved well of their Country; or cou'd with justice complain of the ungrateful Returns made by their Fellow-Citizens, whom, while they were in power,  
they

they had taken no care to make better DIAL.  
Men, by improving and cultivating their V.  
Minds with the Principles of Virtue, {  
which if they had done, they needed not  
to have feared their Ingratitude. If I  
were to declare my opinion, what gave  
the chief Advantage to *Greeks* and *Ro-*  
*mans* and other Nations, which have made  
the greatest Figure in the World, I shou'd  
be apt to think it was a peculiar Reve-  
rence for their respective Laws and Insti-  
tutions, which inspired them with Steadi-  
ness and Courage, and that hearty gene-  
rous Love of their Country, by which they  
did not meerly understand a certain Lan-  
guage or Tribe of Men, much less a par-  
ticular spot of Earth, but included a cer-  
tain System of Manners, Customs, No-  
tions, Rites, and Laws Civil and Reli-  
gious. *ALC.* Oh! I perceive your Drift,  
you wou'd have us reverence the Laws  
and Religious Institutions of our Coun-  
try. But herein we beg to be excused, if  
we do not think fit to imitate the *Greeks*,  
or to be governed by any Authority what-  
soever. But to return: As for Wars and  
Factions, I grant they ever were and ever  
will be in the World upon some pretext  
or other, as long as Men are Men.

DIAL. XIX. But there is a sort of War and  
 V. Warriors peculiar to Christendom, which  
 the Heathens had no notion of: I mean  
 Disputes in Theology and Polemical Divines, which the World hath been wonderfully pestered with: these Teachers of Peace, Meekness, Concord, and what not! if you take their word for it: But, if you cast an eye upon their Practice, you find them to have been in all Ages the most contentious, quarrelsome, disagreeing Crew that ever appeared upon Earth. To observe the Skill and Sophistry, the Zeal and Eagerness, with which those Barbarians, the School Divines, split Hairs and contest about Chimæra's, gives me more Indignation, as being more absurd and a greater scandal to humane Reason, than all the ambitious Intrigues, Cabals, and Politicks of the Court of *Rome*. CRI. If Divines are quarrelsome, that is not so far forth as Divine, but as Undivine and Unchristian. Justice is a good thing; and the Art of Healing is excellent; nevertheless in the administering of Justice or Physic Men may be wronged or poisoned. But as Wrong cannot be Justice, or the Effect of Justice, so Poison cannot be Medicine or the Effect of Medicine, so neither can Pride or Strife be Religion or the effect of Religion. Having

ving premised this, I acknowledge, you may often see hot-headed Bigots engage themselves in religious as well as civil Parties, without being of credit or service to either. And as for the Schoolmen in particular, I do not in the least think the Christian Religion concerned in the Defence of them, their Tenets, or their Method of handling them: but, whatever futility there may be in their Notions, or inelegancy in their Language, in pure justice to Truth one must own, they neither banter nor rail nor declaim in their Writings, and are so far from shewing Fury or Passion, that perhaps an impartial Judge will think, the Minute Philosophers are by no means to be compared with them, for keeping close to the Point, or for Temper and good Manners. But after all, if Men are puzzled, wrangle, talk nonsense, and quarrel about Religion, so they do about Law, Physic, Politics, and every thing else of moment. I ask whether in these Professions, or in any other, where men have refined and abstracted, they do not run into Disputes, Chicane, Nonsense, and Contradictions, as well as in Divinity? And yet this doth not hinder but there may be many excellent Rules, and just Notions, and useful Truths in all those Professions. In all Disputes humane  
Pas-

DIAL.

V.



**DIAL.** Passions too often mix themselves, in proportion as the Subject is conceived to be more or less important. But we ought not to confound the Cause of Men with the Cause of God, or make Humane Follies an Objection to Divine Truths. It is easy to distinguish what looks like Wisdom from above, and what proceeds from the passion and weakness of Men. This is so clear a Point, that one wou'd be tempted to think, the not doing it was an Effect, not of Ignorance, but, of something worse.

**XX.** The Conduct we object to Minute Philosophers is a natural consequence of their Principles. Whatsoever they can reproach us with is an Effect, not of our Principles, but of Human Passion and Frailty. *ALC.* This is admirable. So we must no longer object to Christians the absurd Contentions of Councils, the Cruelty of Inquisitions, the Ambition and Usurpations of Churchmen. *CRI.* You may object them to Christians but not to Christianity. If the Divine Author of our Religion and his Disciples have sowed a good Seed; and together with this good Seed, the Enemies of his Gospel (among whom are to be reckoned the Minute Philosophers of all Ages) have sowed bad Seeds, whence spring Tares and Thistles; is it not evident

dent, these bad Weeds cannot be imputed to the good Seed, or to those who sowed it? Whatever you do or can object against Ecclesiastical Tyranny, Usurpation, or Sophistry, may, without any blemish or disadvantage to Religion, be acknowledged by all true Christians; provided still that you impute those wicked Effects to their true Cause, not blaming any Principles or Persons for them, but those that really produce or justify them. Certainly, as the Interests of Christianity are not to be supported by unchristian Methods, whenever these are made use of, it must be supposed there is some other latent Principle which sets them at work. If the very Court of *Rome* hath been known, from Motives of Policy, to oppose settling the Inquisition in a Kingdom, where the secular Power hath endeavoured to introduce it in spite of that Court\*: We may well suppose, that elsewhere Factions of *State*, and Political Views of Princes, have given birth to Transactions seemingly religious, wherein at bottom neither Religion, nor Church, nor Churchmen, were at all consider'd. As no Man of common Sense and Honesty will engage in a general Defence of Ecclesiastics, so I think no Man of common Candour can condemn

† P. Paolo istoria dell' Inquisizione p. 42.

DIAL. them in general. Wou'd you think it rea-

V. sonable, to blame all Statesmen, Lawyers, or Soldiers, for the Faults committed by those of their Profession, though in other Times, or in other Countries, and influenced by other Maxims and other Discipline? And if not, why do you measure with one Rule to the Clergy, and another to the Laity? Surely the best Reason that can be given for this is Prejudice. Shou'd any Man rake together all the Mischiefs that have been committed in all Ages and Nations, by Soldiers and Lawyers, you wou'd, I suppose, conclude from thence, not that the State shou'd be deprived of those useful Professions, but only that their Exorbitances shou'd be guarded against and punished. If you took the same equitable Course with the Clergy, there wou'd indeed be less to be said against you; but then you wou'd have much less to say. This plain obvious Consideration, if every one who read considered, wou'd lessen the Credit of your Declaimers. *ALC.* But when all is said that can be said, it must move a Man's Indignation to see reasonable Creatures, under the Notion of Study and Learning, employ'd in reading and writing so many voluminous Tracts, *de lanâ caprinâ.* *CRI.* I shall not undertake the Vindication of Theological Writings,

a general Defence, being as needless as a *DIAL.*  
 general Charge is groundless. Only let *V.*  
 them speak for themselves; and let no Man  
 condemn them upon the Word of a Mi-  
 nute Philosopher. But we will imagine  
 the very worst, and suppose a wrangling  
 Pedant in Divinity disputes and ruminates  
 and writes upon a refined Point, as useless  
 and unintelligible as you please. Suppose  
 this same Person bred a Layman, might  
 he not have employ'd himself in tricking  
 Bargains, vexatious Law-suits, Factions,  
 Seditions, and such like Amusements, with  
 much more Prejudice to the Publick?  
 Suffer then curious Wits to spin Cobwebs;  
 where is the hurt? *ALC.* The Mischief  
 is, what Men want in light they common-  
 ly make up in Heat: Zeal, and ill Nature,  
 being Weapons constantly exerted by the  
 Partisans, as well as Champions, on either  
 Side: And those perhaps not mean Pedants  
 or Book-worms. You shall often see even  
 the learned and eminent Divine lay him-  
 self out in explaining Things inexplica-  
 ble, or contend for a barren Point of The-  
 ory, as if his Life, Liberty, or Fortune  
 were at stake. *CRI.* No doubt all Points  
 in Divinity are not of equal Moment.  
 Some may be too fine spun, and others  
 have more Stress laid on them than they

DIAL. deserve. Be the Subject what it will, you  
 V. shall often observe that a Point by being  
 ~~~~~ controverted, singled out, examined, and  
 nearly inspected, groweth considerable to  
 the same Eye, that, perhaps, wou'd have  
 overlooked it in a large and comprehensive  
 View. Nor is it an uncommon thing, to  
 behold Ignorance and Zeal united in Men,  
 who are born with a Spirit of Party,  
 though the Church or Religion have in  
 Truth but small Share in it. Nothing is  
 easier than to make a *Caricatura* (as the  
 Painters call it) of any Profession upon  
 Earth: But at bottom, there will be found  
 nothing so strange in all this Charge upon  
 the Clergy, as the Partiality of those who  
 censure them, in supposing the common  
 Defects of Mankind peculiar to their Or-  
 der, or the Effect of religious Principles.  
 ALC. Other Folks may dispute or squab-  
 ble as they please, and no Body mind  
 them; but it seems, these venerable Squab-  
 bles of the Clergy pass for Learning, and  
 interest Mankind. To use the Words of  
 the most ingenious Characterizer of our  
 Times, "A Ring is made, and Readers ga-  
 "ther in abundance. Every one takes  
 "Party and encourages his own Side. This  
 "shall be my Champion! This Man for  
 "my Money! Well hit on our Side! Again  
 "a



“ a good Stroke! There he was even with DIAL.  
 “ him! Have at him the next Bout! Ex- V.  
 “ cellent Sport! \* ” *CRI.* Methinks I trace }  
 the Man of Quality and Breeding in this  
 delicate Satyr, which so politely ridicules  
 those Arguments, Answers, Defences, and  
 Replications which the Press groans under,  
*ALC.* To the infinite waste of Time and  
 Paper, and all the while no Body is one  
 whit the wiser. And who indeed can be  
 the wiser for reading Books upon Subjects  
 quite out of the way, incomprehensible,  
 and most wretchedly written? What Man  
 of Sense or Breeding wou'd not abhor the  
 Infection of prolix Pulpit Eloquence, or  
 of that dry, formal, pedantic, stiff, and  
 clumsy Style which smells of the Lamp  
 and the College.

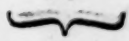
XXI. They who have the Weakness  
 to reverence the Universities as Seats of  
 Learning, must needs think this a strange  
 Reproach; but it is a very just one. For  
 the most ingenious Men are now agreed,  
 that they are only Nurseries of Preju-  
 dice, Corruption, Barbarism, and Pedantry.  
*LYS.* For my part, I find no Fault with  
 Universities. All I know is, that I had  
 the spending three hundred Pounds a Year

\* Characteristics, Vol. III. c. 2.

DIAL. in one of them, and think it the chearful-  
 V. lest time of my Life. As for their Books  
 and Style I had not leisure to mind them.

CRI. Whoever hath a mind to weed will never want work ; and he that shall pick out bad Books on every Subject will soon fill his Library. I do not know what Theological Writings *Alciphron* and his Friends may be conversant in ; but I will venture to say, one may find among our *English* Divines many Writers, who for compass of Learning, weight of Matter, Strength of Argument, and Purity of Style, are not inferior to any in our Language. It is not my Design to apologize for the Universities: whatever is amiss in them (and what is there perfect among Men?) I heartily wish amended. But I dare affirm, because I know it to be true, that any impartial Observer, although they shou'd not come up to what in Theory he might wish or imagine, will nevertheless find them much superior to those that in Fact are to be found in other Countries, and far beyond the mean Picture that is drawn of them by Minute Philosophers. It is natural for those to rail most at Places of Education, who have profited least by them. Weak and fond Parents will also readily impute to a wrong Cause, those

Cor-

Corruptions themselves have occasion'd, DIAL-  
by allowing their Children more Money V.  
than they knew how to spend innocently:   
And too often a Gentleman who has been  
idle at the College, and kept idle Com-  
pany, will judge of a whole University  
from his own Cabal. *ALC.* *Crito* mi-  
stakes the Point. I vouch the Authority,  
not of a Dunce or a Rake or absurd Pa-  
rent, but of the most consummate Critic  
this Age has produced. This great Man cha-  
racterizeth Men of the Church and Uni-  
versities with the finest Touches and most  
masterly Pencil. What do you think he  
calls them? *EUPH.* What? *ALC.* Why,  
the black Tribe, Magicians, Formalists,  
Pedants, bearded Boys, and, having suf-  
ficiently derided and exploded them and  
their mean ungenteel Learning, he sets  
most admirable Models of his own for  
good Writing: And it must be acknow-  
ledged they are the finest things in our  
Language; as I cou'd easily convince you,  
for I am never without something of that  
noble Writer about me. *EUPH.* He is  
then a noble Writer. *ALC.* I tell you he  
is a Nobleman. *EUPH.* But a Nobleman  
who writes is one thing, and a noble  
Writer another. *ALC.* Both Characters  
are coincident, as you may see.

DIAL.

V.

XXII. Upon which *Alciphron* pulled a Treatise out of his Pocket, entitled a Soliloquy or Advice to an Author. Wou'd you behold, said he, looking round upon the Company, a noble Specimen of fine Writing; do but dip into this Book: which *Crito* opening read verbatim as follows\*.

[promises]

' Where then are the Pleasures which Ambition  
 ' And Love affords? How's the gay World enjoy'd?  
 ' Or are those to be esteem'd no Pleasures  
 ' Which are lost by Dulness and Inaction?  
 ' But Indolence is the highest Pleasure.  
 ' To live and not to feel! To feel no Trouble.  
 ' What Good then? Life it self. And is  
 ' This properly to live? is sleeping Life?  
 ' Is this what I shou'd study to prolong?  
 ' Here the  
 ' Fantastic Tribe it self seems scandaliz'd.  
 ' A Civil War begins: The major Part  
 ' Of the capricious Dames do range themselves  
 ' On Reason's Side,  
 ' And declare against the languid Siren.  
 ' Ambition blushes at the offer'd Sweet.  
 ' Conceit and Vanity take superior Airs.  
 ' Ev'n Luxury her self in her polite  
 ' And elegant Humour reproves th' Apostate  
 ' Sister.

Part. 3. Sect. 2.

' And

- ‘ *And marks her as an Alien to true Pleasure.*
- ‘ *Away thou*
- ‘ *Drowsy Phantome ! Haunt me no more for I*
- ‘ *Have learned from better than thy Sisterhood*
- ‘ *That Life and Happiness consist in Action*
- ‘ *And Employment.*
- ‘ *But here a busy Form solicits us,*
- ‘ *Active, Industrious, Watchful and despising*
- ‘ *Pains and Labour. She wears the serious*
- ‘ *Countenance of Virtue, but with Features*
- ‘ *Of Anxiety and Disquiet.*
- ‘ *What is’t she mutters ? What looks she on with*
- ‘ *Such Admiration and Astonishment ?*
- ‘ *Bags ! Coffers ! Heaps of shining Metal ! What ?*
- ‘ *For the service of Luxury ? For her ?*
- ‘ *These Preparations ? Art thou then her Friend,*
- ‘ *Grave Fancy ! Is it for her thou toilest ?*
- ‘ *No, but for Provision against Want.*
- ‘ *But Luxury apart ! tell me now,*
- ‘ *Hast thou not already a Competence ?*
- ‘ *’Tis good to be secure against the Fear*
- ‘ *Of starving. Is there then no Death but this ?*
- ‘ *No other Passage out of Life ? Are other Doors*
- ‘ *Secur’d if this be bar’d ? Say Avarice !*
- ‘ *Thou emptiest of Phantomes, is it not vile*
- ‘ *Cowardice thou serv’st ? what further have I then*
- ‘ *To do with thee (thou doubly vile Dependent)*
- ‘ *When once I have dismiss’d thy Patroness,*



DIAL. ' *And despised her threats?*

V. ' *Thus I contend with Fancy and Opinion.*

*Euphranor*, having heard thus far, cried out: What! will you never have done with your Poetry? another time may serve: But why shou'd we break off our Conference to read a Play? You are mistaken, it is no Play nor Poetry, replied *Alciphron*, but a famous modern Critic moralizing in Prose. You must know this great Man hath (to use his own Words) revealed a *Grand Arcanum* to the World, having instructed Mankind in what he calls *Mirroure-writing, Self-discoursing Practice, and Author Practice*, and shew'd "That  
" by virtue of an intimate Recess, we  
" may discover a certain Duplicity of  
" Soul; and divide our *Self* into two Parties, or (as he varies the Phrase) practically form the Dual Number." In consequence whereof, he hath found out that a Man may argue with himself, and not only with himself, but also with Notions, Sentiments, and Vices, which by a marvellous *Prosopopœia* he converts into so many Ladies, and so converted, he confutes and confounds them in a Divine Strain. Can any thing be finer, bolder, or more sublime? *EUPH.* It is very wonderful.

derful. I thought indeed you had been reading a Piece of a Tragedy. Is this he who despiseth our Universities, and sets up for reforming the Style and Taste of the Age?

*ALC.* The very same. This is the admired Critic of our Times. Nothing can stand the Test of his correct Judgment, which is equally severe to Poets and Parsons. "The *British* Muses (saith this great Man) lisp as in their Cradles: and their stammering Tongues, which nothing but Youth and Rashness can excuse, have hitherto spoken in wretched Pun and Quibble. Our Dramatic *Shakespear*, our *Fletcher*, *Johnson*, and our Epique *Milton* preserve this Style. And, according to him, even our later Authors aiming at a false Sublime, entertain our raw Fancy and unpractised Ear, which has not yet had leisure to form it self, and become truly musical."

*EUPH.* Pray what Effect may the Lessons of this great Man, in whose Eyes our learned Professors are but bearded Boys, and our most celebrated Wits but wretched Punsters, have had upon the Public? Hath he rubbed off the College Rust, cured the rudeness and rawness of our Authors, and reduced them to his own Attic Standard? Do they aspire to his true Sublime, or imitate his chaste unaffected Style? *ALC.*

Doubt-

DIAL. Doubtless the Taste of the Age is much  
V. mended: in proof whereof his Writings  
are universally admired. When our Author published this Treatise, he foresaw the public Taste wou'd improve apace; that Arts and Letters wou'd grow to great perfection; that there wou'd be a happy Birth of Genius: of all which things he spoke, as he saith himself, in a prophetic Style. *CRI.* And yet, notwithstanding the prophetic Predictions of this Critic, I do not find any Science that throve among us of late, so much as the Minute Philosophy. In this kind, it must be confessed, we have had many notable Productions. But whether they are such Masterpieces for good Writing, I leave to be determined by their Readers.

XXIII. In the mean time, I must beg to be excused, if I cannot believe your great Man on his bare word; when he wou'd have us think, that Ignorance and ill Taste are owing to the Christian Religion or the Clergy, it being my sincere Opinion, that whatever Learning or Knowledge we have among us, is derived from that Order. If those, who are so sagacious at discovering a Mote in other Eyes, wou'd but purge their own, I believe they might easily see this Truth. For what but Religion

gion cou'd kindle and preserve a Spirit towards Learning, in such a Northern rough People? *Greece* produced Men of active and subtile Genius. The public Conventions and Æmulations of their Cities forwarded that Genius: And their natural Curiosity was amused and excited by learned Conversations, in their public Walks and Gardens and Porticos. Our Genius leads to Amusements of a grosser kind: we breathe a grosser and a colder Air: and that Curiosity which was general in the *Athenians*, and the gratifying of which was their chief Recreation, is among our People of Fashion treated like Affectation, and as such banished from polite Assemblies and places of Resort; and without doubt wou'd in a little Time be banished the Country, if it were not for the great Reservoirs of Learning, where those Formalists, Pedants, and bearded Boys, as your profound Critic calls them, are maintained by the Liberality and Piety of our Predecessors. For it is as evident that Religion was the Cause of those Seminaries, as it is that they are the Cause or Source of all the Learning and Taste which is to be found, even in those very Men who are the declared Enemies of our Religion and public Foundations. Every one, who knows any thing, knows we are indebted for our Learning to the  
*Greek*

DIAL.  
V.



DIAL. *Greek* and *Latin* Tongues. This those fe-

V. vere Censors will readily grant. Perhaps

they may not be so ready to grant, what all Men must see, that we are indebted for those Tongues to our Religion. What else cou'd have made foreign and dead Languages in such request among us? What cou'd have kept in being and handed them down to our times, through so many dark Ages in which the World was wasted and disfigured by Wars and Violence? What, but a regard to the Holy Scriptures, and Theological Writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church? And in fact, do we not find that the Learning of those Times was solely in the Hands of Ecclesiastics, that they alone lighted the Lamp in succession one from another, and transmitted it down to After-ages; and that ancient Books were collected and preserved in their Colleges and Seminaries, when all Love and Remembrance of polite Arts and Studies was extinguished among the Laity, whose Ambition intirely turned to Arms?

XXIV. *ALC.* There is, I must needs say, one sort of Learning undoubtedly of Christian Original, and peculiar to the Universities; where our Youth spend several Years in acquiring that mysterious jargon



gon of Scholasticism; than which there cou'd never have been contrived a more effectual Method, to perplex and confound Humane Understanding. It is true, Gentlemen are untaught by the World what they have been taught at the College: but then their Time is doubly lost. *CRI.* But what if this scholastic Learning was not of Christian but of Mahometan Original, being derived from the *Arabs*? And what if this Grievance of Gentlemen's spending several Years in learning and unlearning this Jargon, be all Grimace and a Specimen only of the truth and candour of certain Minute Philosophers, who raise great Invectives from slight occasions, and judge too often without inquiring. Surely it wou'd be no such deplorable loss of Time, if a young Gentleman spent a few Months upon that so much despised and decried Art of Logic, a Surfeit of which is by no means the prevailing Nufance of this Age. It is one thing to waste one's Time in learning and unlearning the barbarous Terms, wiredrawn Distinctions, and prolix Sophistry of the Schoolmen, and another to attain some exactness in Defining and Arguing: Things perhaps not altogether beneath the Dignity even of a Minute Philosopher. There was indeed a Time, when Logic was considered as  
its

DIAL. its own Object: And that Art of Reason-  
 V. ing, instead of being transferred to Things  
 turned altogether upon Words and Ab-  
 stractions; which produced a sort of Le-  
 prosy in all parts of Knowledge, corrupt-  
 ing and converting them into hollow ver-  
 bal Disputations in a most impure Dia-  
 lect. But those Times are passed; and  
 that, which had been cultivated as the  
 principal Learning for some Ages, is now  
 considered in another Light, and by no  
 means makes that Figure in the Univer-  
 sities, or bears that Part in the Studies  
 of young Gentlemen educated there, which  
 is pretended by those admirable Reform-  
 ers of Religion and Learning, the Mi-  
 nute Philosophers.

XXV. But who were they that en-  
 couraged and produced the Restoration of  
 Arts and polite Learning? What Share  
 had the Minute Philosophers in this Af-  
 fair? *Matthias Corvinus* King of *Hunga-*  
*ry*, *Alphonfus* King of *Naples*, *Cosmus de*  
*Medicis*, *Picus* of *Mirandula*, and other  
 Princes and great Men, famous for Learn-  
 ing themselves, and for encouraging it  
 in others with a munificent Liberality,  
 were neither Turks nor Gentiles nor Mi-  
 nute Philosophers. Who was it that trans-  
 planted and revived the *Greek Language*  
 and

and Authors, and with them all polite Arts and Literature in the West? Was it not chiefly *Bessarion* a Cardinal, *Marcus Musurus* an Archbishop, *Theodore Gaza* a private Clergyman? Has there been a greater and more renowned Patron, and Restorer of elegant Studies in every kind, since the days of *Augustus Cæsar*, than *Leo* the tenth Pope of *Rome*? Did any Writers approach the Purity of the *Classics* nearer than the Cardinals *Bembus* and *Sadoletus*, or than the Bishops *Jovius* and *Vida*? not to mention an endless Number of ingenious Ecclesiastics, who flourished on the other side of the *Alpes* in the Golden Age (as the *Italians* call it) of *Leo* the Tenth, and wrote, both in their own Language and the *Latin*, after the best Models of Antiquity. It is true, this first Recovery of Learning preceded the Reformation, and lighted the way to it: But the Religious Controversies, which ensued, did wonderfully propagate and improve it in all Parts of Christendom. And surely, the Church of *England* is, at least, as well calculated for the Encouragement of Learning, as that of *Rome*. Experience confirms this Observation; and I believe the Minute Philosophers will not be so partial to *Rome* as to deny it. *ALC.* It is impossible your account of Learning be-

Y yond


DIAL. yond the *Alpes* shou'd be true. The noble Critic in my hands, having complimented the *French*, to whom he allows some good Authors, asserts of other Foreigners, particularly the *Italians*, "That they may be reckoned no better than the Corrupters of true Learning and Erudition." CRI. With some sorts of Critics, Dogmatical Censures and Conclusions are not always the result of perfect Knowledge or exact Inquiry: And if they harangue upon Taste, truth of Art, a just Piece, grace of Style, Attic Elegance and such Topics, they are to be understood only as those that would fain talk themselves into Reputation for Courage. To hear *Thrasymachus* speak of Resentment, Duels, and point of Honour, one wou'd think him ready to burst with Valour. LYS. Whatever Merit this Writer may have as a Demolisher, I always thought he had very little as a Builder. It is natural for careless Writers to run into Faults they never think of: But for an exact and severe Critic to shoot his Bolt at random, is unpardonable. If he, who professes at every turn an high esteem for polite Writing, shou'd yet despise those who most excel in it; one would be tempted to suspect his Taste. But if the very Man, who of all Men talks most about

about Art, and Taste, and critical Skill, DIAL.  
and wou'd be thought to have most con- V.  
sidered those Points, shou'd often deviate  
from his own Rules, into the false Sub-  
lime or the *mauvaise Plaisanterie*; What  
reasonable Man wou'd follow the Taste  
and Judgment of such a Guide, or be se-  
duced to climb the steep Ascent, or tread  
in the rugged Paths of Virtue on his Re-  
commendation?

XXVI. *ALC.* But to return, methinks  
*Crito* makes no Compliment to the Ge-  
nius of his Country, in supposing that  
*Englishmen* might not have wrought out  
of themselves, all Art and Science and  
good Taste, without being beholden to  
Church, or Universities, or ancient Lan-  
guages. *CRI.* What might have been is  
only Conjecture. What has been, it is not  
difficult to know. That there is a Vein in  
*Britain*, of as rich an Ore as ever was in  
any Country, I will not deny; but it lies  
deep, and will cost Pains to come at: And  
extraordinary Pains require an extraordi-  
nary Motive. As for what lies next the  
Surface, it seems but indifferent, being  
neither so good nor in such plenty as in  
some other Countries. It was the Com-  
parison of an ingenious *Florentine*, that  
the celebrated Poems of *Tasso* and *Ariosto*



DIAL. are like two Gardens, the one of Cucum-

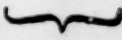
V.  bers, the other of Melons. In the one you shall find few bad, but the best are not a very good Fruit, in the other much the greater part are good for nothing, but those that are good are excellent. Perhaps the same Comparison may hold, between the *English* and some of their Neighbours. *ALC.* But suppose we should grant that the Christian Religion and its Seminaries might have been of use, in preserving or retrieving polite Arts and Letters; what then? Will you make this an Argument of its Truth? *CRI.* I will make it an Argument of Prejudice and Ingratitude in those Minute Philosophers, who object Darkness, Ignorance, and Rudeness, as an Effect of that very thing, which above all others hath enlightened and civilized and embellished their Country: which is as truly indebted to it for Arts and Sciences (which nothing but Religion was ever known to have planted in such a Latitude) as for that general Sense of Virtue and Humanity, and the Belief of a Providence and future State, which all the Argumentation of Minute Philosophers hath not yet been able to abolish.

XXVII. *ALC.* It is strange you shou'd still persist to argue, as if all the Gentlemen of our Sect were Enemies to Virtue,  
and

and downright Atheists: Though I have DIAL.  
 assured you of the contrary, and that we V.

have among us several, who profess themselves in the Interests of Virtue and Natural Religion, and have also declared, that I my self do now argue upon that Foot.  
*CRI.* How can you pretend, to be in the Interest of Natural Religion, and yet be professed Enemies of the Christian, the only established Religion which includes whatever is excellent in the Natural, and which is the only means of making those Precepts, Duties, and Notions, so called, become revered throughout the World? Would not he be thought weak or insincere, who shou'd go about to persuade People, that he was much in the Interests of an earthly Monarch; that he loved and admired his Government; when at the same time he shewed himself on all occasions, a most bitter Enemy of those very Persons and Methods, which above all others contributed most to his Service, and to make his Dignity known and revered, his Laws observed, or his Dominion extended? And is not this what Minute Philosophers do, while they set up for Advocates of God and Religion, and yet do all they can to discredit Christians and their Worship? It must be owned, indeed, that you argue against Christiani-

DIAL. ty, as the Cause of Evil and Wickedness  
 V. in the World ; but with such Arguments,  
 and in such a manner, as might equally  
 prove the same thing of civil Govern-  
 ment, of Meat and Drink, of every Fa-  
 culty and Profession, of Learning, of  
 Eloquence, and even of Humane Reason  
 it self. After all, even those of your Sect  
 who allow themselves to be called Deists,  
 if their Notions are thoroughly examined,  
 will I fear be found to include little of  
 Religion in them. As for the Providence  
 of God watching over the Conduct of  
 Humane Agents and dispensing Blessings  
 or Chastisements, the Immortality of the  
 Soul, a final Judgment, and future State  
 of Rewards and Punishments; how few,  
 if any, of your Free-thinkers have made  
 it their Endeavour to possess Mens Minds  
 with a serious sense of those great points of  
 Natural Religion! How many, on the  
 contrary, endeavour to render the Belief  
 of them doubtful or ridiculous! *LYS.* To  
 speak the Truth, I, for my part, had ne-  
 ver any liking to Religion of any kind,  
 either revealed or unrevealed: And I dare  
 venture to say the same for those Gentle-  
 men of our Sect that I am acquainted  
 with, having never observed them guilty  
 of so much meanness, as even to mention  
 the Name of God with Reverence, or  
 speak

speak with the least regard of Piety DIAL.  
 or any sort of Worship. There may per- V.  
 haps be found one or two formal pre-   
 tenders to Enthusiasm and Devotion, in  
 the way of Natural Religion, who laughed  
 at Christians for publishing Hymns and  
 Meditations, while they plagued the  
 World with as bad of their own : But the  
 sprightly Men make a jest of all this. It  
 seems to us meer Pedantry. Sometimes,  
 indeed, in good Company one may hear  
 a Word dropt in Commendation of Ho-  
 nour and Good-nature : but the former of  
 these, by *Connoisseurs*, is always understood  
 to mean nothing but Fashion, as the lat-  
 ter is nothing but Temper and Constitu-  
 tion, which guides a Man just as Appetite  
 doth a Brute.

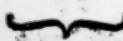
XXVIII. And after all these Argu-  
 ments and Notions, which beget one ano-  
 ther without end ; to take the matter short,  
 neither I nor my Friends for our Souls  
 cou'd ever comprehend, why Man  
 might not do very well, and govern him-  
 self without any Religion at all, as well as  
 a Brute which is thought the fillier Crea-  
 ture of the two.\* Have Brutes Instincts,  
 Senses, Appetites, and Passions, to steer  
 and conduct them? So have Men, and  
 Reason over and above to consult upon  
 Y 4 occasion,


DIAL. occasion. From these Premises we conclude, the Road of Humane Life is sufficiently lighted withour Religion. *CRI.* Brutes having but small power, limited to things present or particular, are sufficiently opposed and kept in order, by the Force or Faculties of other Animals and the Skill of Man, without Conscience or Religion: But Conscience is a necessary balance to Humane Reason, a Faculty of such mighty Extent and Power, especially toward Mischief. Besides, other Animals are, by the Law of their Nature, determined to one certain end or kind of Being, without Inclination or Means either to deviate or go beyond it. But Man hath in him a Will and higher Principle; by virtue whereof he may pursue different or even contrary ends; and either fall short of or exceed the Perfection natural to his Species in this World, as he is capable either, by giving up the Reins to his sensual Appetites, of degrading himself into the condition of Brutes, or else, by well ordering and improving his Mind, of being transformed into the similitude of Angels. Man alone of all Animals hath understanding to know his God. What availeth this Knowledge unless it be to ennoble Man, and raise him to an Imitation and Participation of the Divinity? Or  
what



what cou'd such Ennoblement avail if to end with this Life? Or how can these things take effect without Religion? But the points of Vice and Virtue, Man and Beast, Sense and Intellect, have been already at large canvassed. What! *Lyficles*, wou'd you have us go back where we were three or four days ago? *LYS.* By no means: I had much rather go forward, and make an end as soon as possible. But to save trouble, give me leave to tell you once for all, that, say what you can, you shall never persuade me so many ingenious agreeable Men are in the wrong, and a pack of snarling four Bigots in the right.

XXIX. O *Lyficles*, I neither look for Religion among Bigots, nor Reason among Libertines; each kind disgrace their several Pretensions; the one owning no regard even to the plainest and most important Truths, while the others exert an angry Zeal for points of least concern. And surely whatever there is of silly, narrow, and uncharitable in the Bigot, the same is in great measure to be imputed to the conceited Ignorance, and petulant Profaneness of the Libertine. And it is not at all unlikely that as Libertines make Bigots, so Bigots shou'd make Libertines, the Extreme of one party being  
ever

DIAL. ever observed to produce a contrary Extreme of another. And although, while  
V.  these Adversaries draw the Rope of Contention, Reason and Religion are often called upon, yet are they perhaps very little considered or concerned in the Contest. *Lysicles*, instead of answering *Crito*, turned short upon *Alciphron*. It was always my Opinion, said he, that nothing cou'd be fillier than to think of destroying Christianity, by crying up Natural Religion. Whoever thinks highly of the one can never, with any consistency, think meanly of the other; it being very evident, that Natural Religion, without Revealed, never was and never can be established or received any where, but in the brains of a few idle speculative Men. I was aware what your Concessions wou'd come to. The Belief of God, Virtue, a Future State, and such fine Notions are, as every one may see with half an eye, the very Basis and corner Stone of the Christian Religion. Lay but this Foundation for them to build on, and you shall soon see what Superstructures our Men of Divinity will raise from it. The Truth and Importance of those points once admitted, a Man need be no Conjuror to prove, upon that Principle, the Excellency and Usefulness of the  
Christian

Christian Religion : And then to be sure, DIAL.  
there must be Priests to teach and propa- V.  
gate this useful Religion. And if Priests,   
a regular Subordination without doubt in  
this worthy Society, and a Provision for  
their Maintenance, such as may enable  
them to perform all their Rites and Ce-  
remonies with Decency, and keep their  
sacred Character above Contempt. And  
the plain consequence of all this is a Con-  
federacy between the Prince and the  
Priesthood to subdue the People : So we  
have let in at once upon us, a long train  
of Ecclesiastical Evils, Priestcraft, Hie-  
rarchy, Inquisition. We have lost our  
Liberty and Property, and put the Na-  
tion to vast Expence, only to purchase  
Bridles and Saddles for their own  
backs.

XXX. This being spoke with some  
Sharpness of Tone, and an upbraiding Air,  
touched *Alciphron* to the quick, who re-  
plied nothing, but shew'd Confusion in his  
Looks. *Crito* smiling look'd at *Euphranor*  
and me, then, casting an eye on the two  
Philosophers, spoke as follows : If I may  
be admitted to interpose good Offices, for  
preventing a Rupture between old Friends  
and Brethren in Opinion, I wou'd observe,  
that in this Charge of *Lyficles* there is  
something

DIAL. something right and something wrong. If  
 V. seems right to assert as he doth, that the  
 { real Belief of Natural Religion will lead a  
 Man to approve of Revealed: But it is  
 as wrong to assert, that Inquisitions, Ty-  
 ranny, and Ruin must follow from thence.  
 Your Free-Thinkers, without Offence be  
 it said, seem to mistake their Talent.  
 They imagine strongly, but reason weakly;  
 mighty at Exaggeration, and jejune in Ar-  
 gument! Can no Method be found, to re-  
 lieve them from the Terror of that fierce  
 and bloody Animal an *English* Parson? Will  
 it not suffice to pair his Talons without  
 chopping off his Fingers? Then they are  
 such wonderful Patriots for Liberty and  
 Property! When I hear these two Words  
 in the mouth of a Minute Philosopher, I  
 am put in mind of the *Teste di Ferro* at  
*Rome*. His Holiness, it seems, not hav-  
 ing Power to assign Pensions on *Spanish*  
 Benefices to any but Natives of *Spain*, al-  
 ways keeps at *Rome* two *Spaniards*, called  
*Teste di Ferro*, who have the Name of all  
 such Pensions but not the Profit, which  
 goes to *Italians*. As we may see every  
 day, both Things and Notions placed to  
 the account of Liberty and Property,  
 which in reality neither have nor are meant  
 to have any share in them. What! Is it  
 impossible for a Man to be a Christian,  
 but

but he must be a Slave; or a Clergyman, DIAL.  
 but he must have the Principles of an In- V.  
 quisitor? I am far from screening and ju-  
 stifying Appetite of Domination or Ty-  
 rannical Power in Ecclesiastics. Some,  
 who have been guilty in that respect, have  
 sorely paid for it, and it is to be hoped  
 they always will. But having laid the  
 Fury and Folly of the ambitious Prelate,  
 is it not time to look about and spy whe-  
 ther, on the other hand, some Evil may  
 not possibly accrew to the State, from the  
 overflowing Zeal of an Independent Whig?  
 This I may affirm, without being at any  
 pains to prove it, that the worst Tyranny  
 this Nation ever felt was from the Hands  
 of Patriots of that Stamp.

XXXI. *LYS.* I don't know. Tyranny is  
 a harsh Word, and sometimes misapplied.  
 When spirited Men of independent Maxims  
 create a Ferment or make a Change in the  
 State: He that loseth is apt to consider  
 things in one light, and he that wins in  
 another. In the mean time this is certain-  
 ly good Policy, that we shou'd be frugal  
 of our Money, and reserve it for better  
 Uses, than to expend on the Church and  
 Religion. *CRI.* Surely the old Apologue  
 of the Belly and Members need not be re-  
 peated to such knowing Men. It shou'd  
 seem



**DIAL.** seem as needless to observe, that all other  
**V.** States, which ever made any Figure in the  
World for Wisdom and Politeness, have  
thought Learning deserved Encouragement  
as well as the Sword; that Grants for religious  
Uses were as fitting as for Knights  
Service; and Foundations for propagating  
Piety, as necessary to the publick Welfare  
and Defence, as either Civil or Military  
Establishments. But I ask who are  
at this Expence, and what is this Expence  
so much complained of? **LYS.** As if you  
had never heard of Church Lands and  
Tithes. **CRI.** But I wou'd fain know,  
how they can be charged as an Expence,  
either upon the Nation or private Men.  
Where nothing is exported the Nation loseth  
nothing: and it is all one to the Publick,  
whether Money circulates at Home  
through the Hands of a Vicar or a  
Squire. Then as for private Men, who,  
for want of Thought, are full of Complaint  
about the payment of Tithes; can  
any Man justly complain of it as a Tax,  
that he pays what never belonged to him?  
The Tenant rents his Farm with this  
Condition, and pays his Landlord proportionably  
less, than if his Farm had been exempt  
from it: So he loseth nothing; it being all  
one to him, whether he pays his Pastor or  
his Landlord. The Landlord  
cannot

cannot complain that he has not what he hath no Right to, either by Grant, Purchase, or Inheritance. This is the Case of Tithes ; and as for the Church Lands,

DIAL.  
V.

He surely can be no Free-thinker, nor any Thinker at all, who doth not see that no Man whether Noble, Gentle, or Plebeian, hath any sort of Right or Claim to them, which he may not with equal Justice pretend to all the Lands in the Kingdom.

*LYS.* At present indeed we have no Right, and that is our Complaint. *CRI.* You

wou'd have then what you have no Right to. *LYS.* Not so neither : what we

wou'd have is first a Right convey'd by Law, and in the next place, the Lands by virtue of such Right. *CRI.* In order to this,

it might be expedient in the first place, to get an Act passed for excommunicating from all Civil Rights every Man, that is a Christian, a Scholar, and wears a black Coat, as guilty of three capital Offences against the public Weal of this Realm. *LYS.*

To deal frankly, I think it wou'd be an excellent good Act. It wou'd provide at once for several deserving Men, rare Artificers in Wit and Argument and Ridicule, who have, too many of them, but small Fortunes with a great Arrear of Merit towards their Country, which they have so long enlightened and adorned *gratis*.

*EUPH.*

DIAL. *EUPH.* Pray tell me, *Lyficles*, are not  
 V. the Clergy legally possessed of their Lands  
 and Emoluments? *LYS.* No Body denies  
 it. *EUPH.* Have they not been pos-  
 sessed of them from Time immemorial?  
*LYS.* This too I grant. *EUPH.* They  
 claim then by Law and ancient Prescrip-  
 tion. *LYS.* They do. *EUPH.* Have  
 the oldest Families of the Nobility a better  
 Title? *LYS.* I believe not. It grieves  
 me to see so many overgrown Estates in  
 the hands of ancient Families, on account  
 of no other Merit, but what they brought  
 with them into the World. *EUPH.* May  
 you not then as well take their Lands too,  
 and bestow them on the Minute Philoso-  
 phers, as Persons of more Merit? *LYS.* So  
 much the better. This enlarges our View,  
 and opens a new Scene: It is very delight-  
 ful in the Contemplation of Truth, to  
 behold how one Theory grows out of ano-  
 ther. *ALC.* Old *Pætus* used to say, that  
 if the Clergy were deprived of their Hire,  
 we shou'd lose the most popular Argu-  
 ment against them. *LYS.* But so long  
 as Men live by Religion, there will never  
 be wanting Teachers and Writers in De-  
 fence of it. *CRI.* And how can you be  
 sure they wou'd be wanting, though they  
 did not live by it; since it is well known  
 Christianity had its Defenders even when  
 Men

Men died by it? One thing I know: there DIAL.  
 is a rare Nursery of young Plants grow- V.  
 ing up, who have been carefully guarded ~  
 against every Air of Prejudice, and sprink-  
 led with the Dew of our choicest Princi-  
 ples; mean while, Wishes are wearisome,  
 and to our infinite Regret nothing can be  
 done, so long as there remains any Pre-  
 judice in favour of old Customs and Laws  
 and national Constitutions, which, at bot-  
 tom, we very well know and can de-  
 monstrate to be only Words and Notions.

XXXII. But, I can never hope, *Crito*,  
 to make you think my Schemes rea-  
 sonable. We reason each right upon  
 his own Principles, and shall never agree  
 till we quit our Principles, which cannot  
 be done by reasoning. We all talk of Just  
 and Right and Wrong, and Public Good,  
 and all those things. The Names may be  
 the same, but the Notions and Conclu-  
 sions very different, perhaps diametrically  
 opposite; and yet each may admit of clear  
 Proofs, and be inferred by the same way  
 of reasoning. For instance, the Gentlemen  
 of the Club which I frequent, define Man  
 to be a sociable Animal: Consequently,  
 we exclude from this Definition all those  
 Humane Creatures, of whom it may be  
 Z said,



DIAL. said, we had rather have their Room than  
 V. their Company. And such, though wear-  
 ing the Shape of Man, are to be esteem'd  
 in all account of Reason, not as Men, but  
 only as Humane Creatures. Hence it  
 plainly follows, that Men of Pleasure, Men  
 of Humour, and Men of Wit, are alone  
 properly and truly to be considered as  
 Men. Whatever therefore conduceth to  
 the Emolument of such, is for the good of  
 Mankind, and consequently very just and  
 lawful, although seeming to be attended  
 with Loss or Damage to other Creatures :  
 inasmuch as no real injury can be done in  
 life or property to those, who know not  
 how to enjoy them. This we hold for  
 clear and well connected Reasoning. But  
 others may view things in another light,  
 assign different Definitions, draw other In-  
 ferences, and perhaps consider, what we  
 suppose the very Top and Flower of the  
 Creation, only as a wart or excrescence of  
 Humane Nature. From all which there  
 must ensue a very different System of Mo-  
 rals, Politics, Rights, and Notions. CRI.  
 If you have a mind to argue, we will  
 argue, if you have more mind to jest, we  
 will laugh with you. LYS.

— *Ridentem dicere verum*  
*Quid vetat ?*

This



This Partition of our kind into Men and Humane Creatures, puts me in mind of another Notion, broached by one of our Club, whom we used to call the *Pythagorean*. DIAL.  
V.

XXXIII. He made a threefold Partition of the Humane Species, into Birds, Beasts, and Fishes, being of Opinion that the Road of Life lies upwards, in a perpetual Ascent through the Scale of Being : In such sort, that the Souls of Insects after death make their second Appearance, in the Shape of perfect Animals, Birds, Beasts, or Fishes ; which upon their death are preferred into Humane Bodies, and in the next Stage into Beings of a higher and more perfect kind. This Man we considered at first as a sort of Heretic, because his Scheme seemed not to consist with our fundamental Tenet, the Mortality of the Soul : But he justified the Notion to be innocent, inasmuch as it included nothing of Reward or Punishment, and was not proved by any Argument, which supposed or implied either incorporeal Spirit, or Providence, being only inferred, by way of Analogy, from what he had observed in Humane Affairs, the Court, the Church, and the Army ; wherein the Tendency is always upwards from lower Posts to higher. According to this Sys-

DIAL. tem, the Fishes are those Men who swim

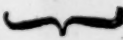
V. in pleasure, such as *petits maitres*, *bons vivans*, and honest Fellows. The Beasts are dry, drudging, covetous, rapacious Folk, and all those addicted to care and business like Oxen, and other dry land Animals, which spend their lives in labour and fatigue. The Birds are airy notional Men, Enthusiasts, Projectors, Philosophers, and such like: in each Species every Individual retaining a Tincture of his former State, which constitutes what is called Genius. If you ask me which Species of Humane Creatures I like best, I answer, The flying Fish; that is, a Man of animal Enjoyment with a mixture of Whim. Thus you see we have our Creeds and our Systems, as well as graver Folks; with this Difference, that they are not strait-laced but sit easy, to be slipped off or on, as humour or occasion serves. And now I can, with the greatest æquanimity imaginable, hear my Opinions argued against, or confuted.

XXXIV. *ALC.* It were to be wished, all Men were of that mind. But you shall find a sort of Men, whom I need not name, that cannot bear with the least temper, to have their Opinions examined  
or

or their Faults censured. They are against Reason, because Reason is against them. For our parts we are all for Liberty of Conscience. If our Tenets are absurd, we allow them to be freely argued and inspected; and by parity of Reason we might hope to be allowed the same Privilege, with respect to the Opinions of other Men. *CRI.* O *Alciphron*, Wares that will not bear the light are justly to be suspected. Whatever therefore moves you to make this Complaint, take my word I never will: But as hitherto I have allowed your Reason its full scope, so for the future I always shall. And though I cannot approve of railing or declaiming, not even in my self, whenever you have shewed me the way to it: Yet this I will answer for, that you shall ever be allowed to reason as closely and as strenuously as you can. But for the love of Truth, be candid, and do not spend your Strength and our Time, in points of no significance, or foreign to the purpose, or agreed between us. We allow that Tyranny and Slavery are bad things: but why shou'd we apprehend them from the Clergy at this time? Rites and Ceremonies we own are not Points of chief moment in Religion: but why shou'd we ridicule things in their own Nature, at least,

DIAL. Innocent, and which bear the Stamp of  
 V. supreme Authority? That Men in Divi-  
 nity, as well as other Subjects, are per-  
 plexed with useless Disputes, and are like  
 to be so as long as the World lasts I freely  
 acknowledge: But why must all the Hu-  
 mane Weakness and Mistakes of Clergy-  
 men be imputed to wicked Designs? Why  
 indiscriminately abuse their Character and  
 Tenets? Is this like Candour, love of  
 Truth, and Free-thinking? It is granted  
 there may be found, now and then, spleen  
 and ill-breeding in the Clergy: But are  
 not the same Faults incident to *English*  
 Laymen, of a retired Education and  
 Country Life? I grant there is infinite  
 Futility in the Schoolmen: but I deny  
 that a Volume of that doth so much  
 Mischief, as a Page of Minute Philoso-  
 phy. That weak or wicked Men shou'd,  
 by favour of the World, creep into  
 Power and high Stations in the Church, is  
 nothing wonderful: and that in such  
 Stations they shou'd behave like themselves,  
 is natural to suppose. But all the while  
 it is evident, that not the Gospel but the  
 World, not the Spirit but the Flesh, not  
 God but the Devil, puts them upon their  
 unworthy Atchievements. We make no  
 difficulty to grant, that nothing is more  
 infamous



infamous than Vice and Ignorance in a DIAL.  
 Clergyman; nothing more base than a V.  
 Hypocrite, more frivolous than a Pedant,   
 more cruel than an Inquisitor. But it  
 must be also granted by you, Gentlemen,  
 that nothing is more ridiculous and ab-  
 surd, than for pedantic, ignorant, and  
 corrupt Men to cast the first Stone, at  
 every shadow of their own Defects and  
 Vices in other Men.

XXXV. *ALC.* When I consider the  
 detestable State of Slavery and Su-  
 perstition, I feel my Heart dilate and  
 expand it self to grasp that inestimable  
 blessing of Liberty, absolute Liberty in  
 its utmost unlimited Extent. This is the  
 sacred and high Prerogative, the very life  
 and health of our *English* Constitution. You  
 must not therefore think it strange, if with  
 a vigilant and curious Eye, we guard it  
 against the minutest Appearance of Evil.  
 You must even suffer us to cut round a-  
 bout, and very deep, and make use of the  
 magnifying Glass, the better to view and  
 extirpate every the least speck, which  
 shall discover it self in what we are care-  
 ful and jealous to preserve, as the Apple  
 of our Eye. *CR I.* As for unbounded  
 Liberty I leave it to Savages, among  
 whom



DIAL. whom alone I believe it is to be found:

V. But, for the reasonable legal Liberty of our Constitution, I most heartily and sincerely wish it may for ever subsist and flourish among us. You and all other *Englishmen* cannot be too vigilant, or too earnest, to preserve this goodly frame, or to curb and disappoint the wicked Ambition of whoever, Layman or Ecclesiastic, shall attempt to change our free and gentle Government into a slavish or severe one. But what Pretext can this afford for your Attempts against Religion, or indeed how can it be consistent with them? Is not the Protestant Religion a main part of our Legal Constitution? I remember to have heard a Foreigner remark, that we of this Island were very good Protestants, but no Christians. But whatever Minute Philosophers may wish, or Foreigners say, it is certain our Laws speak a different Language. *ALC.* This puts me in mind of the wise reasoning of a certain sage Magistrate, who, being pressed by the Raillery and Arguments of an ingenious Man, had nothing to say for his Religion but that, ten Millions of People inhabiting the same Island might, whether right or wrong, if they thought good, establish Laws for the worshipping of

of God in their Temples, and appealing DIAL.  
 to him in their Courts of Justice. And V.  
 that in case ten thousand ingenious Men ~  
 shou'd publickly deride and trample on  
 those Laws, it might be just and lawful for  
 the said ten Millions, to expel the said  
 ten thousand ingenious Men out of their  
 said Island. *EUPH.* And pray, what  
 answer wou'd you make to this remark of  
 the sage Magistrate? *ALC.* The answer  
 is plain. By the Law of Nature, which is  
 superior to all positive Institutions, Wit  
 and Knowledge have a right to command  
 Folly and Ignorance. I say, ingenious  
 Men have by natural Right a Dominion  
 over Fools. *EUPH.* What Dominion  
 over the Laws and People of *Great Bri-*  
*tain*, Minute Philosophers may be entitled  
 to by Nature, I shall not dispute, but  
 leave to be considered by the Public.  
*ALC.* This Doctrine, it must be owned,  
 was never thoroughly understood before  
 our own times. In the last age *Hobbes*  
 and his Followers, though otherwise very  
 great Men, declared for the Religion of  
 the Magistrate, probably because they  
 were afraid of the Magistrate; but times  
 are changed, and the Magistrate may now  
 be afraid of us. *CRI.* I allow the Ma-  
 gistrate may well be afraid of you in one  
 sense,

DIAL. sense, I mean, afraid to trust you. This  
 V. brings to my Thoughts a Passage  
 on the trial of *Leander* for a capital  
 Offence: That Gentleman having picked  
 out and excluded from his Jury, by  
 peremptory exception, all but some Men  
 of Fashion and Pleasure, humbly moved  
 when *Dorcon* was going to kiss the Book,  
 that he might be required to declare upon  
 Honour, whether he believed either God  
 or Gospel. *Dorcon*, rather than hazard his  
 Reputation as a Man of Honour and  
 Free-thinker, openly avow'd that he be-  
 lieved in neither. Upon which the  
 Court declared him unfit to serve on a  
 Jury. By the same reason, so many were  
 set aside, as made it necessary to put off  
 the Trial. We are very easy, replied *Al-*  
*ciphron*, about being trusted to serve on  
 Juries, if we can be admitted to serve in  
 lucrative Employments. *CRI.* But what  
 if the Government shou'd injoin, that  
 every one, before he was sworn into  
 Office, shou'd make the same Declaration  
 which *Dorcon* was required to make?  
*ALC.* God forbid! I hope there is no  
 such Design on foot. *CRI.* Whatever  
 Designs may be on foot, thus much is  
 certain: The Christian Reformed Religion  
 is a principal Part and Corner-stone of

our free Constitution ; and I verily think, DIAL.  
the only thing that makes us deserving V.  
of Freedom, or capable of enjoying it. }  
Freedom is either a Blessing or a Curse as  
Men use it. And to me it seems, that if  
our Religion were once destroy'd from  
among us, and those Notions, which pass  
for Prejudices of a Christian Education,  
erased from the minds of *Britons*, the  
best thing that cou'd befall us wou'd be  
the loss of our Freedom. Surely a People  
wherein there is such restless Ambition,  
such high Spirits, such Animosity of  
Faction, so great Interests in Contest,  
such unbounded Licence of Speech and  
Press, amidst so much Wealth and Luxu-  
ry, nothing but those *veteres aviaë*, which  
you pretend to extirpate, cou'd have hi-  
therto kept from ruin.

XXXVI. Under the Christian Religion  
this Nation hath been greatly improved.  
From a sort of Savages, we have grown  
civil, polite, and learned : We have made  
a decent and noble Figure both at home and  
abroad. And, as our Religion decreaseth,  
I am afraid we shall be found to have  
declin'd. Why then shou'd we persist in  
the dangerous Experiment ? *ALC.* One  
wou'd think, *Crito*, you had forgot the  
many



DI AL. many Calamities occasioned by Church-  
 V. men and Religion. CRI. And one  
 } wou'd think, you had forgot what was  
 answered this very day to that Objection.  
 But, not to repeat eternally the same  
 things, I shall observe in the first place,  
 That if we reflect on the past State of  
 Christendom, and of our own Country in  
 particular, with our Feuds and Factions sub-  
 sisting while we were all of the same Re-  
 ligion, for instance, that of the White and  
 Red Roses, so violent and bloody and of  
 such long continuance; we can have no  
 assurance that those ill humours, which  
 have since shewn themselves under the  
 masque of Religion, wou'd not have  
 broke out with some other Pretext, if this  
 had been wanting. I observe in the se-  
 cond place, that it will not follow from  
 any Observations you can make on our  
 History, that the Evils, accidentally oc-  
 casioned by Religion, bear any proportion  
 either to the good Effects it hath really  
 produced, or the Evils it hath prevented.  
 Lastly, I observe, that the best things  
 may by accident be the occasion of Evil;  
 which accidental Effect is not, to speak  
 properly and truly, produced by the good  
 thing it self, but by some evil thing, which,  
 being neither Part, Property, nor Effect  
 of



of it, happens to be joined with it. But DIAL.  
 I shou'd be ashamed to insist and enlarge V.  
 on so plain a Point, and shall only add {  
 that, whatever Evils this Nation might  
 have formerly sustained from Superstition,  
 no Man of common sense will say, the Evils  
 felt or apprehended at present are from  
 that Quarter. Priestcraft is not the reigning  
 Distemper at this Day. And surely it  
 will be owned, that a wise Man, who  
 takes upon him to be vigilant for the public  
 Weal, shou'd touch proper things at  
 proper times, and not prescribe for a  
 Surfeit when the Distemper is a Con-  
 sumption. *ALC.* I think we have suffi-  
 ciently discussed the Subject of this day's  
 Conference. And now, let *Lyficles* take  
 it as he will, I must in regard to my own  
 Character, as a fair impartial Adversary,  
 acknowledge there is something in what  
*Crito* hath said upon the Usefulness of the  
 Christian Religion. I will even own to  
 you that some of our Sect are for allowing  
 it a Toleration. I remember, at a meet-  
 ing of several ingenious Men, after much  
 debate we came successively to divers Re-  
 solutions. The first was, that no Reli-  
 gion ought to be tolerated in the State:  
 But this on more mature thought was  
 judged impracticable. The second was  
 that

DIAL. that all Religions shou'd be tolerated, but  
 V. none countenanced except Atheism: But  
 { it was apprehended, that this might breed  
 Contentions among the lower sort of People. We came therefore to conclude in the third place, that some Religion or other shou'd be established for the use of the Vulgar. And after a long Dispute what this Religion shou'd be, *Lyfis* a brisk young Man, perceiving no signs of Agreement, proposed that the present Religion might be tolerated, till a better was found. But allowing it to be expedient, I can never think it true, so long as there lie unanswerable Objections against it, which, if you please, I shall take the Liberty to propose at our next meeting. To which we all agreed,

*The End of the First Volume.*



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